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TOPICS OF THE DAY.

THE week opened with the saddest public event that has been known in this land for many a year. In the earliest dawn of Sunday morning the electric wires were flashing to the metropolis and the main cities of the empire the melancholy intelligence that the Royal consort of our beloved and gracious Queen had terminated by a premature death a distinguished

and useful career. A great nation was at once thrown into mourning, gloom, and all but despondency. There was something dreadfully shocking in the thought that one in so eminent a position—one who was the guide, the friend, the husband of our Royal Mistress, upon whom she leaned with so much confidence and affection for counsel and for succour—should be snatched away from her and from us at an age so unripe and

in a crisis so fraught with difficulty and danger. The first impulse of every generous heart was a thrill of earnest sympathy with the griefs of the English household in Windsor Castle, the wail of whose genuine and poignant sorrow broke on the silent midnight as the faithful and loving husband, the fond and affectionate father, was torn from them by the relentless grasp of Death. We may be disposed to look with comparative



HIS LATE ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE CONSORT IN HIS UNIFORM OF FIELD MARSHAL.

indifference upon the smaller troubles of the great because of their general fortunate immunity from the cares and vexations which fall to the lot of ordinary men; but there is something peculiarly affecting in their position when some such awful visitation and bereavement as this throws its dark shadow over the gilded splendour of courts and palaces. The very elevation of the great seems to augment their misery. They fall at once from the height of prosperity into the lowest depths of sadness and despair. The smaller sorrows which vex us all they are comparatively free from, but these train us for adversity and dwarf the magnitude of our larger griefs. We live more than they do in the school of suffering, and learn its salutary lessons.

Our next feeling, after sympathy the most heartfelt with the bereaved, was a conviction of the serious and momentous loss which we as a nation had experienced. Prince Albert was a great power in this country, and a great power for good. If to certain members of our proud and jealous aristocracy he gave occasional offence—if he ever, and probably under provocation, assumed an arrogance of manner unworthy of his intellect and culture—if in his interference with the Army he fell into some few mistakes—what are all these but proofs that he was mortal, and that he was not free from the errors which are the lot of man? But these are trifling and easily forgotten, and very venial shortcomings in one whose moral character in every relation of life was so free from blame, whose intellectual capacity was so prominent, and whose taste was so cultivated and refined. He was in many respects the man of the age, and the man for the age. He was essentially prescient and sagacious. The daily and hourly adviser of our beloved Sovereign on all questions of European and national importance, he nevertheless never thrust himself into the councils of the nation in any obtrusive or offensive way. His influence was felt, but unseen. He never courted popularity by any symptoms of political partisanship. He wisely knew the prejudices and the jealousy of Englishmen on this point, and he withstood a temptation which might have led many astray. His ambition, therefore, took the practical and useful turn of aiding our scientific progress, our development of art, the improvement of agriculture, and the extension of commerce.

"These are Imperial arts and worthy Kings," and to these he applied himself with a devotion and an earnestness which ensured success. To him we owe the Great Exhibition of 1851, which gave a stimulus to commercial and artistic ingenuity and enterprise such as it had never before received. From that sprang the beautiful edifice on the hills of Sydenham, and under the fostering influences of his suggestion and direction arose the building now in progress at Kensington, about which there are so many sad forebodings in consequence of his untimely and lamented death. In him how many a philanthropic institution, how many a learned body, how many an artistic guild has lost a sincere friend and an appreciating patron! It is good that the great should be the patrons of art, but when they do so injudiciously and without taste and discernment, they do it much injury. Prince Albert had a profound knowledge of art, and his taste was of the highest and most refined character.

It is most consolatory to gather from the best sources of information that her Majesty, although so recently tried by a loss which so deeply affected her, is bearing this yet more bitter bereavement with queenly fortitude and Christian resignation. It is also most gratifying to know that she is surrounded and supported in the midst of this awful trial by her affectionate children. The Prince of Wales is of an age to render her much valuable service, and the occasion presents to him an admirable opportunity—of which it is to be hoped he will readily avail himself—of proving that he is worthy of the great and ancient throne which he inherits. To him now all eyes look with deep interest and anxious expectancy. The pleasures and pastimes of youth should have but little attraction for one who is ultimately to rule the greatest kingdom in the world. He should now endeavour to occupy during the many years which we trust will be granted to her gracious Majesty the position which his accomplished father held. And if he does this, and does it with singleness of purpose, steadiness of aim, from a high sense of duty, from a love to his mother and a love of his country, he will hereafter receive the well-merited gratitude of his subjects, and sway the sceptre of these realms over a devoted and a loyal people.

All other subjects lose interest and moment placed in juxtaposition with the topic upon which we have designedly said so much, even to the exclusion of other subjects. The much-talked-of Finsbury election has concluded in the victory of Mr. Cox, who will again enjoy the privilege of inventing extraordinary historical parallels, and suggesting ingenious historical theories in the House of Commons. Our lively friend *Punch* has now another subject, and Mr. Williams, of Lambeth, need no longer monopolise the satirical powers of our contemporary's staff. The *Times* of Wednesday contained a leading article written in a tone of bewilderment at the condition of the metropolitan boroughs. We cannot suppose that Mr. Cox's triumph is owing to his superior intellectual qualities or to his oratorical powers. He is more advanced in his liberal opinions than Mr. Mills; he did not pledge himself to support a Government; and the class of voters who sympathised with Mr. Cox's opinions were more earnest and active than the languid respectabilities of "serious" Highbury.

The hope, which we expressed last week, is, we think, nearer its fulfilment, and the chances of peace with America increase.

This will gratify every patriotic mind, provided that peace is not attained by any arrangement that compromises our honour. We can afford to be magnanimous, but we must be just. One or two possible unravellings or cuttings of the Gordian knot of the Trent difficulty have been suggested. That the Americans will explain, not in a hostile but in a courteous and conciliatory tone, there appears to be no doubt. The difficult question is that of restoring Messrs. Slidell and Mason. Ought we not to be perfectly satisfied if they are sent back to the Havannah, or if they are sent to any neutral nation: until an international arbitration has been held to express an opinion upon this still disputed question of international law?

Foreign Intelligence.

FRANCE.

An Imperial decree has been published in the *Moniteur* to the effect that in future no projects shall be submitted to the Emperor increasing the charges upon the budget without being accompanied by an opinion from the Minister of Finance as to whether there are sufficient funds in the Exchequer to meet the expenses proposed to be incurred. Another decree published in the official journal deprives a professor of French literature in Lyons of his professional office in consequence of his having published in a journal a poem containing what M. Rouland, Minister of Public Instruction, terms "injurious allusions to the Sovereign who has arisen from universal suffrage, and the nation which he gloriously governs." A third decree, disbanding the 103rd Regiment of the Line and the 1st Regiment of the Foreign Legion has appeared. This, we presume, is designed as an instalment of army retrenchment. It is also said that 60,000 men would shortly be released on furlough.

In the Senate on Tuesday M. Troplong presented his report on the Senatus Consultum in reference to the extension of the privileges of the Corps Legislatif. He discussed at great length the suppression of extraordinary credits and the plan of voting the budget in detail. He rejected all idea of re-establishing Ministerial responsibility, and in alluding to the deficit called attention to the great things that had been done since 1858. These, he said, had served to raise the French name to the highest rank, and to carry the influence of France to the extremity of the world. The discussion was adjourned until Friday.

SPAIN.

The address of the Congress in reply to the Queen's speech has been passed by 223 against 79 votes.

ITALY.

King Victor Emmanuel, it is said, will go to Naples at the beginning of February next.

The committee appointed by the Chamber of Deputies at Turin to inquire into the charge made by Dr. Bertani, that letters were opened by the Government in passing through the post, have reported, exonerating the Ministry from the charge. The other proceedings in the Parliament had reference to matters of internal reforms and the reorganisation of the administrative machinery.

All the officers of the Southern Italian army have been ordered not to leave their homes until further orders; and all temporary furloughs are for the present suspended.

Chiaione's band of brigands is now reduced to 200. They are discouraged, and reduced to great distress. Their communication with Rome has been cut off, and they can receive no more money. According to advices from Naples, a band of brigands had entered Cervinara, in the Principato Ultra, plundered the warehouses, opened the prisons, and released seven prisoners.

A letter from Garibaldi to the Genoa Committee has been published, in which he says:—

We are near the final solution of the national question. Notwithstanding the obstacles thrown in our way by enemies, by false friends, and by the timid, whereby our progress has been arrested, we must go on to the end. The rivalry of individuals must cease. We must leave it to history to pass judgment on our task. Let us be still more closely united around the flag of our *Risorgimento*. Let us mutually and solemnly agree to meet on the last battle-field at the side of our brave army, which will still find companions worthy of its brotherly co-operation. All is a token of victory.

Garibaldi concludes by calling upon the committees of the *Provedimento Society* to lend their active co-operation.

The Marquis de Lavalette, Ambassador of France at Rome, has had a long conference with Francis II., and it is said that his object was to recommend, on the part of the French Government, that the ex-King should quit Rome. A further statement is that the Cardinals who were consulted on the subject had recommended Francis II. to relinquish his apartments in the Quirinal and reside altogether at the Palace Farnese, in order, we presume, to diminish the appearance of collusion between the expelled Sovereign and the Papal authorities.

AUSTRIA.

The Upper House of the Reichsrath on the 14th inst. voted the laws for preserving the inviolability of letters, for assuring personal liberty, and for maintaining the right of domicile.

The Budget was presented to the Council of the Empire on Tuesday, and shows that there is a deficit in the income, as compared with the expenditure, during 1861, of between 40,000,000 and 50,000,000 florins, and the deficit for 1862 is estimated at 58,000,000 florins. The deficit is partly to be covered by increased taxes and partly by credit operations with the National Bank, the charter of which is to be renewed in return for a loan of 80,000,000 florins bearing no interest. Twenty millions of this loan will be repaid in monthly instalments of 1,000,000 florins each, and 44,000,000 by 1870. The State domains are to be sold at certain fixed periods.

The army estimates show an increase of 52,000,000 florins. The unsettled state of things in Hungary has caused a loss to the revenue of 11,500,000 florins. The total decrease in the revenue for 1861 amounts to 109,500,000 florins.

The Russian Government, it is said, has protested against the step recently taken by Austria in sending troops to denolish the batteries of the insurgents in the Sutorina on the ground that any rights Austria might have had in reference to the military road in that region were abolished by the Paris Conference of 1856.

The disorders in Hungary still continue, and brigandage on an extensive scale has made its appearance in several of the comitatus. Bands of men, well armed and even mounted, traverse the country and levy contributions, principally seeking, as the Austrian organs assert, arms and ammunition before any other description of plunder. "At the gates of Baja brigands stopped, during the last fair, nearly sixty vehicles, and took away 15,000 florins, besides many valuable articles and horses."

PRUSSIA.

According to a letter from Berlin, the result of the recent elections has produced a painful impression on the Government; and the King, for his part, is so displeased at it that he has, it is said, resolved not to open the new Chamber in person. Some persons had even recommended a dissolution of the Chamber, but hopes were entertained that the Government would not have recourse to such an extreme measure.

POLAND.

The resignation by the Marquis Wielopolski of his official duties is again affirmed. He remains, however, it is said, a member of the Council of State. On the 11th the United Basilican Church was reopened. Great crowds were present. There are, it is asserted,

fifty Roman Catholic priests, three Protestant ministers, and twelve Jewish rabbis in prison, for upholding the rights of conscience and protesting against the profanity to which their religious buildings were subjected.

SWEDEN.

The King of Sweden has rather unexpectedly taken his departure for Norway, and a Ministerial crisis now exists at Stockholm, owing to the attitude of the Norwegian Government relating to the union and the complaints which Norway has expressed in somewhat imperative terms. King Charles XV. hopes that his presence will contribute to allay passions and to satisfy wishes which the general interest does not absolutely command him to resist.

TURKEY.

The monetary panic still continues at Constantinople. It is said to have been caused by fraudulent speculations in the metalliques market. The Turkish lira had risen from 200 piastres to 370 piastres. Paper money is generally refused.

CHINA AND JAPAN.

News received from Peking to the 13th of October states that the apprehensions that the change in the Chinese Government would disturb the friendly relations between China and the European Powers appeared to be unfounded. Prince Kung, chief of the party favourable to intercourse with Europe, had visited the Emperor at Sehe, notwithstanding that he had received orders not to leave Peking. Prince Kung returned to Peking highly gratified with the results obtained by his journey.

The reports from the Foreign Legations at Peking are satisfactory. The English and French troops assisted the Chinese to hold Chefoo against the rebels, who ultimately retreated. Shanghai is in a state of alarm on account of the proximity of the rebels.

Canton was evacuated on the 21st of October. The state of affairs in Japan continues unsatisfactory. The European representatives are awaiting instructions from their respective Governments.

The head-quarters of the British Minister are still at Yokohama.

THE IONIAN ISLANDS.

The Ionian Parliament was dissolved on the 7th inst., pursuant to a proclamation by her Majesty in Council, passed on the 20th of November, and a new election ordered. The Lord High Commissioner issued instructions to the Government officers not to interfere in favour of or against candidates during the new elections.

AUSTRALASIA.

The intelligence from Australia is devoid of political interest. Sir Henry Barkly was at the gold-diggings. A motion for the suspension of Mr. Justice Boothby had been passed by the South Australian Legislature. The *furor* occasioned by the discovery of gold in New Zealand has been followed by a reaction, thousands having been disappointed of the wealth with which they allowed their imaginations to be cheated.

Sir George Grey had arrived at Auckland and assumed the Government of New Zealand. Nothing had been decided with respect to the quarrel with the natives. The latter were quiet, evidently expecting the Government to make the first overtures.

THE CIVIL WAR IN AMERICA.

CONGRESS assembled at Washington on the 2nd of December, and at once proceeded to business. After some formal matters had been arranged Mr. Lovejoy, of Illinois (Rep.), in the House of Representatives, offered a joint resolution tendering the thanks of Congress to Captain Wilks for his arrest of the traitors Slidell and Mason. Mr. Edgerton, of Ohio (Rep.), moved, as a substitute, that the President be requested to present Captain Wilks with a gold medal, with suitable emblems and devices, expressive of the high sense of confidence entertained for him by Congress in his prompt arrest of the rebels Mason and Slidell. The original resolution was adopted. Mr. Breckinridge has been expelled from the Senate. A committee has been appointed to inquire into the expediency of abolishing slavery in the district of Columbia.

The Federal Navy Department had also expressed its approval of the conduct of Captain Wilks. The Secretary, in his report laid before Congress, says, after detailing the circumstances connected with the stoppage of the Trent:—

The prompt and decisive action of Captain Wilks on this occasion merited and received the emphatic approval of the department, and, if a too generous forbearance was exhibited by him in not capturing the vessel which had these rebel enemies on board, it may, in view of the special circumstances and of its patriotic motives, be excused; but it must by no means be permitted to constitute a precedent hereafter for the treatment of any case of similar infraction of neutral obligations by foreign vessels engaged in commerce or the carrying trade.

A summary of the Message of President Lincoln is given below.

Among the documents laid before Congress is some important correspondence between the Federal Government and various European Powers. It appears that Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet offered to accept the declaration of the Paris Conference against privateering, provided that England and France would include the Southern Confederacy in the new arrangement; but, as they declined to do this, the negotiations fell to the ground. There is also some correspondence between Mr. Seward and Mr. Adams with reference to the position of England, and it terminates with a declaration on the Secretary of State's part that if, this country abstains from all interference with American affairs, the Federal Government will be satisfied as to its friendly intentions. Austria, Prussia, and Spain had refused to recognise the Confederate States—the first two in very decided language.

Another interesting item of news is that, under the supervision of the Secretary of the Treasury, measures are to be adopted to export cotton and other crops from the Southern States. The negroes, who but the other day were slaves, are to be employed in this service, and will receive wages.

Two fleets of vessels, laden with stones, had been dispatched to the South—one with instructions to deposit the cargoes at the mouth of the Savannah River, and the other in the entrance to Charleston harbour, so as completely to block up these important ports. Other naval expeditions are spoken of, from which, as the New York papers say, "brilliant feats may be expected."

Much uncertainty still prevailed as to the affair at Pensacola, some accounts asserting that the Federals had had the best of the fighting, and others that the advantage rested with the Confederates. Possibly there may be, as in the case of other so-called desperate battles, much more smoke than mischief—more noise than reality—in the whole affair.

It is asserted that President Lincoln had declared that it was his intention to preserve a prudent policy in regard to foreign relations, and that there need be no fear of war with Great Britain unless the latter should seek a pretext for hostilities.

General Wool has asked the Government for troops to advance on Richmond from Fortress Monroe.

Advices from Port Royal state that a regiment which made a reconnaissance towards Charleston went within twenty miles of the city and captured three batteries, the guns of which they spiked. They found quantities of cotton, but the Confederates were destroying much of that article. The party returned in safety.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S MESSAGE.

On the 4th instant President Lincoln delivered his Message in the Federal Congress at Washington. On the views of Mr. Lincoln as to the question which most interests the people of England the Message throws no light—there is not one word of direct allusion to the affair of the Trent in the document. Of course, it was known

to the President at the time he delivered his Message that Captain Wilks had boarded the Trent, had taken the Confederate Commissioners and their secretaries from that vessel, and had conveyed them to America as prisoners; but the views of the British Government and people on the matter could not then be known to the President. In these circumstances it may be supposed that the President abstained from all reference to the matter, in order not to commit himself to any line of conduct till he should have an opportunity of learning what might be the effect produced on foreign Governments especially on that of Great Britain, by the step Commodore Wilks took in the Bahama Passage. The precise motive, however, for this reticence on the part of Mr. Lincoln subsequent events only can explain; and it would be idle to speculate at present as to whether or not the President's silence may be construed in a sense favourable or otherwise to the maintenance of peace between the Federal Government and ourselves.

The following is a summary of the contents of the Message. In reference to the foreign policy of his Government Mr. Lincoln says:—

You will not be surprised to hear that, in the peculiar exigencies of the times, our intercourse with foreign nations has been attended with profound solicitude, chiefly turning upon our own domestic affairs. A nation which endures factions and domestic divisions is exposed to disrespect abroad, and one party, if not both, is sure, sooner or later, to invoke foreign intervention.

The disloyal citizens of the United States, who have offered the ruin of our country in return for the aid and comfort which they have invoked abroad, have received less patronage and encouragement than they probably expected.

The insurgents have seemed to assume that foreign nations, in this case (discarding all moral, social, and treaty obligations), would act solely and selfishly for the most speedy restoration of commerce, including especially the acquisition of cotton; but those nations appear as yet not to have seen their way to their object more directly or clearly through the destruction than through the preservation of the Union.

I am quite sure a second argument could be made to show them that they can reach their aim much more readily and easily by aiding to crush this rebellion than by giving encouragement to it.

The principal lever relied on by the insurgents for exciting foreign nations to hostilities against us is the embarrassment of commerce.

Those nations, however, not improbably saw from the first that it was the Union which made as well our foreign as our domestic commerce. They can scarcely have failed to perceive that the efforts for disunion produce the existing difficulty, and that one strong nation promises more durable peace, and a more extensive, more valuable, and more reliable commerce, than can the same nation broken into hostile fragments.

It is not my purpose to review our discussion with foreign States, because, whatever might be their wishes or dispositions, the integrity of our country and the stability of our Government mainly depend, not upon them, but on the loyalty, virtue, patriotism, and allegiance of the American people.

The foreign correspondence submitted to Congress will show that the Government has practised prudence and liberality towards foreign nations, averting the causes of irritation, but maintaining with firmness the rights and the honour of the country.

Since, however, it is apparent that foreign dangers necessarily attend domestic difficulties, I recommend that adequate and ample measures be adopted for maintaining the public defences on every side, and also that provision be made for defending our coast line.

The Message recommends an appropriation to satisfy the legal demands of the owners of the British ship *Perthshire*, detained under a misapprehension by the United States' steamer *Masachusetts*.

It also recommends that authority be given to the commanders of sailing-vessels to recapture United States' vessels or cargoes taken by pirates, and that the consular courts in eastern countries should adjudicate the cases, but only with the permission of the local authorities.

The President cannot see any reason for further withholding the recognition of the independence of Hayti and Liberia. He urges upon Congress the reconstruction of the Supreme Courts and the adoption of a system for the recovery of debts by Northern men in districts where, through insurrection, the civil tribunals are suppressed.

He suggests the restoration of the original boundaries of the district of Columbia, including that portion on the Virginia side of the Potomac, and continues, "The efforts of the Government to suppress the slave trade have been recently unusually successful."

Under the Confiscation Act the legal claims of certain persons to slaves are forfeited, and numbers thus liberated are dependent upon the Federal Government, and must be protected, for it is possible that some States will pass similar enactments, by which persons of this class will be thrown upon them for disposal.

I would recommend Congress to provide for accepting slaves from such States according to some mode of valuation, so that the slaves on acceptance by the Federal Government would be at once deemed free. Steps might then be taken for colonising such slaves in a climate congenial to them.

The free coloured people in America might also be included in such colonisation.

The plan of colonisation may involve an acquisition of territory, and the appropriation of a sum of money beyond the sum expended for the territorial acquisition.

President Lincoln reviews the course of the Government since its inauguration, and says:—

The progress of events is plainly in the right direction. Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri, who refused to supply troops, now have 40,000 men in the field.

No armed insurrection is left north of the Potomac or east of the Chesapeake. The Union is advancing steadily southwards.

The present insurrection is a war upon the first principles of popular government and the right of the people. The insurgents even hint at Monarchy.

The President states that in the present position he would scarcely be justified in omitting to raise a warning voice against the approach of returning despotism; but denounces the effort to place capital upon an equal footing with labour in the structure of the Government, and concludes by saying that "the struggle of to-day is not altogether of to-day, but it is also for a vast future."

BUNKUM RUN MAD.

We copy the following passages from a letter, just published, of "Manhattan," the New York correspondent of the *London Standard*, to show the spirit which animates what the journal in question calls "a large body of the American people," of whom the writer "is the representative":—

Hereafter all captains in the United States' Navy have orders to seize upon any British vessel that conveys traitors; and if a British ship of war should carry traitors, and any American captain of a United States' vessel know that fact, and have a vessel equal to the British man-of-war, he will chase that vessel until she surrenders her rebel passengers, or sink her, or get whipped herself. If the British Ministry are not cowards they will back up the rebels.

The President has been abused by every press in England. Earl Russell has openly and before the whole world spoken of him as one of the two Presidents, comparing the elected President of the United States with J. F. Davis. Now the President is ready. He says to the Government of England, "Don't sneak, but fight. You have before the world insulted the nation through me. Now let us have a fair fight." He says to the English Minister, indirectly, "You have stated that this Union is in fragments—is powerless. Now let us try conclusions." He says in his Message to his own people, "Prepare for war." His allusion to the lakes leaves no room to doubt who we are to have a war with. You have seen how 500,000 men sprung up to put down the Southern rebellion: 500,000 more will be up, and ready to invade Canada before the ice breaks up. A wise English Ministry would have calculated the cost before dashing their fists in the face of the President.

I long ago said that the President could unite the people of the United States by two courses of action. One was to allow the Southern slaves to free themselves. The scorn would soon grow to an oak, and would not leave a white man, woman, or child in the Cotton States. The other was to increase the army and navy, and then commence a foreign war. The British Ministers have been playing into the President's hands, and if it costs England every possession on this coast it will be the shortsightedness of Earl Russell. He has allowed the President to carry out the policy of reward, publicly stated by him twenty years ago—viz., to have a war with England to acquire Canada. The time has come. The President has half a million of men ready to go there. The Southern rebellion is over, or will be by the moment that war is declared against England. The loyalists will then rise and overpower the rebels in every section. All the Irish in the rebel army (20,000) will turn their guns upon the rebel leaders. Look what a false position England will be placed in. She will be fighting for slavery.

But she has not power enough to restore slavery. . . . President Lincoln knows as well as any Canadian does that the first six weeks of war with England will see an overwhelming force at Quebec and at Montreal. We have to keep up an army for several years. Any way, the soldiers will have something to do.

The President directs the attention of Congress to the island of St. Domingo. It is known that we will, sooner or later, take from Spain this island, as well as Cuba. After reconquering them we shall have a say in their affairs. As long as slavery held political power, such a recommendation could not have come from an American President.

We are certainly favoured in this country now. What we have waited anxiously to obtain now drops into the national maw. We have wanted Curaçoa badly. It is the only Dutch island in the West Indies, and is a bother to Holland. We had no excuse for seizing upon it. At last it comes. The President has received the following official despatch:—"Curaçoa, Nov. 9, 1861.—Yesterday morning the United States' steamer *Iroquois* appeared before the harbour, made a sign for the pilot, and was informed, by order of the Governor, that if she came in she could only stay forty-eight hours, and take coal for twenty-four. The commander refused to come in on such terms, and away went the ship. The people here are quite grieved about it, but the Governor had instructions from Holland. They say the Southerners would be treated in the same way. The 1500 tons of coal now lying here for the United States' Government will be of little use to the ships if they cannot come in." There will be no more waiting to see what any European Government has to say. Before three months Curaçoa will be seized by an American squadron, and held until Holland apologises. When that is done the President will pay for Curaçoa at a fair valuation.

ITALY, FRANCE, AND THE POPE.

A Turin journal publishes a series of letters found at Gaeta at the time of the surrender of that place, all addressed by Mgr. de Martino, secretary of Cardinal Antonelli, to Commander Carafa, Minister at Naples during the eventful year 1859. In the first, dated March 29 of that year, Mgr. de Martino informs the latter that the Papal Government will never recognise the right of any conference to meddle with the internal affairs of the Papal Government, and will not send any representative to such a meeting. On the 9th of April following Mgr. de Martino says that Cardinal Antonelli has received, both from Paris and Vienna, the advice to introduce reforms into the Administration of the Papal States, but that the reasons which have hitherto restrained him from so doing are stronger than ever; at all events, "it is better to have one's throat cut by others than to cut it one's self." On the 9th of July the same writer says that in a conference between Cardinal Antonelli and the Duc de Grammont the latter read a letter from the Emperor of the French to the effect that his Majesty had never guaranteed to the Pope any other part of the Papal States but that occupied by the French troops. He adds that this declaration had produced an extraordinary effect upon the Cardinal. As for his Holiness, he was averse to using spiritual weapons in an essentially temporal cause, and had therefore only written a letter to the Emperor on the subject. Meanwhile, Cardinal Antonelli had asked the Ambassador what would be the position of the Roman troops with regard to the Piedmontese, in case the Holy See were to endeavour to reconquer the Romagna with its own troops, since the Emperor of the French would not intervene? This question the Ambassador declined to answer without having first consulted the Emperor. Whereupon Cardinal Antonelli formally demanded that the French troops should occupy the Marches, so as to enable the whole Roman Army to move forward in order to reconquer the Romagna. The result of this application it is known, though not stated in this correspondence. On Aug. 29 Mgr. de Martino states that the Cardinal intends to grant as little as possible in the conferences about to be opened. His position, he says, is extremely difficult, being directly odious, and indirectly treated by an adversary "who freely uses the very powerful argument that he will withdraw the troops which are now the only support of the throne and public order."

THE ERUPTION OF VESUVIUS.

At a quarter-past six in the morning of the 8th inst. there was a sharp shock of earthquake, which made rents in the walls of houses and churches in Torre del Greco and threw down several old buildings. Here and there the soil opened, and deep gaps were to be seen, some of which at the orifice are nearly a foot wide. Immediately after the shock all the houses were abandoned: men, women, and children, some half-dressed, others enveloped in a sheet or a blanket, rushing into the streets, raising cries of terror, and running for refuge to the squares or fields at a distance from all buildings. After the oscillations had ceased, the people returned to their homes to ascertain the damage done. Everywhere they found that there would be danger in remaining in the houses. The people, therefore, began to remove their furniture in great haste. All the boats and other vessels stationed near the shore, and all sorts of vehicles, were filled with goods. Cars drawn by oxen, carts, cabs, omnibuses, and carriages were filled with beds, mattresses, and other household articles. The anxiety of the people to get away their goods was so great that General La Marmora, who, on hearing of the earthquake, had gone to the town, placed at the disposition of the authorities a number of artillery and baggage waggons, as well as several companies of soldiers of the baggage train. The barracks of Graniti, and the convents and monasteries of Portici, were thrown open for the reception of a number of the inhabitants who did not know where to find an asylum. National guards and bersagliers were called out to maintain order and to protect the furniture rescued.

The eruption of Vesuvius had in the meantime commenced. Smoke and cinders ascended from several craters, and the ashes fell in quantities. Shortly after the cone, which had opened on the summit, and in which from midnight only subterranean noises had been heard, began to labour, and an enormous column of thick smoke issued from it, followed by such a shower of ashes that the sky was obscured. At eight o'clock detonations took place at very short intervals, and gradually increased in violence; and incandescent substances were thrown from the great cone to a height of more than two hundred yards. The following night the summit of Vesuvius was in flames. The stream of lava afterwards spared Torre del Greco by turning to the left, where it was partially stopped by a small church which it threw down. Five or six country houses were destroyed by the lava. A quantity of cultivated ground has disappeared under the scoria, which now covers a space of about two miles in length and 50ft. in width. The lava seems to have quite stopped for the present, fortunately without crossing the railway or even the high road; but the eruption continues. The volcano is opening on all sides, suddenly launching forth here and there jets of flame, ashes, scoria, and stones, some of which are thrown with great violence, to the great danger of over-venturous spectators, two of whom have been killed. As the inhabitants continue to get away from the scene of disaster as fast as they can, the road from Torre del Greco is thronged with vehicles removing them and their goods and with carriages carrying strangers to see the eruption. The panic of the first day so far terrified the Bourbonists and thieves that they did not take advantage of the confusion. Fourteen prisoners escaped from the prison of Torre, but there has been no disorder.

IRELAND.

VISITATION OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BELFAST.—The triennial visitation of the above-named college took place by the Irish Lord Chancellor and other proper officials last week, when some demonstrations of a very disreputable character took place. Chancellor Brady is a Roman Catholic, and the conduct of the students is supposed to have been prompted by an excessive and very shameful desire to make a demonstration of Protestant feeling. Before the appointed hour the students had assembled in the Examination Hall, where they indulged themselves for some time in cheering some of those who entered from time to time, or making noise not unusual in colleges when the professors are absent. Some persons thought these too dull, and accordingly "The K-nish fire" was struck up. This was continued for a time, none of the officers of the college being present, and it was succeeded by a counter demonstration of "Garryowen," whistled by a few of the students. Another body of the whistlers sought to overpower this by "The Protestant Boys," and at length neither air was distinguishable. The visitors did not enter the hall till past twelve o'clock, and took their places at a table at one end of the room, the Lord Chancellor presiding, his Grace the Duke of Leinster and others at his right; the Bishop of Down, Dr. Corrigan, and the Moderator of the General Assembly on the left. The proceedings throughout were characterised by the utmost disorder. The Lord Chancellor frequently threatened to clear the room, and stigmatised the conduct of the students as most disgraceful.

LOYAL IRISH VOLUNTEERS FOR CANADA.—Immediately on the announcement of a probable war with America, all the officers of the reserve constabulary, Phoenix Park, Dublin, volunteered for active service in Canada. At the commencement of the Crimean War they did likewise, and sixteen of them were at once appointed to important posts.

SHOCK OF EARTHQUAKE IN IRELAND.—At Tullamore, a few days ago, at twenty minutes to three o'clock, a slight shock of an earthquake was distinctly felt. The shock was accompanied by a rumbling noise, resembling distant thunder, which lasted for several seconds. There was scarcely a cloud to be seen at the time. The aneroid barometer showed 29.19. Thermometer, 43 deg. in the shade. Wind, S.S.W.; force 6. On Sunday an extraordinary meteor was seen in various parts of Ireland. It is described as the size and colour of the moon; and one person states that two bits of a dark colour, crossing each other, gave it exactly the appearance of Britannia's shield.

THE PROVINCES.

A "MONEYED" PAUPER.—An old woman named Bella Heslop, who, with her sister, has for the last twelve months been an inhabitant of Cockermouth Workhouse, was lately buried, and in turning over her effects in Workington £45 3s. 6d. was found, consisting chiefly of half-crown pieces. The old woman had long been considered a fit object for charity, and besides 2s. a week from her parish, she had been in receipt of 16s. per year from Jackson's Charity, and many a shilling from charitable persons. About twelve months ago, however, the fear of starving seems to have come upon her, and she took up her abode in the workhouse, where she remained until her death.

AN AMERICAN WAR-STEAMER OFF HOLYHEAD.—Intelligence reached Kingstown on Saturday morning last by the mail-steamer that a large war-steamer, with double funnels, having a gun-boat tender alongside, was seen the previous night lying off Holyhead. She showed no colours. On her arrival a telegraphic message was without delay forwarded to Liverpool to the commander of the *Resolute*. The steamer is the *Caractacus*, of 800 tons burden. She belongs to the North American Government, and is stated to have been driven into Holyhead harbour by stress of weather. She lies inside the great breakwater, and it is stated that her officers for some time refused to let a pilot or any official on board, no colours being meantime exhibited. This, of course, roused the suspicions of the harbour authorities at Holyhead, and some telegraphic communications relative to the vessel passed between Holyhead and Liverpool—a rumour meantime gaining considerable circulation that she was laden with ammunition.

CHANCELLORSHIP OF CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY.—By the death of his Royal Highness the Prince Consort the chancellorship of the University of Cambridge becomes vacant. The election of a Chancellor must be within fourteen days after the vacancy, and is more *burgensium*. His Royal Highness was elected in 1847, on the death of the Duke of Northumberland, on which occasion he was opposed by the late Earl of Powis. On the part of many members of the University a desire prevails to elect the Prince of Wales as successor to his father, but his extreme youth, it is thought, may be a bar to that wish being fulfilled. Amongst other gentlemen whose names are freely mentioned in connection with the chancellorship are Lord Palmerston, of St. John's College (M.A. 1806); the Duke of Devonshire, of Trinity College, who was second wrangler in 1829; the Earl of Hardwicke, of Queen's College (LL.D. 1835); the Marquis of Lansdowne, of Trinity College (LL.D. 1811); the Earl of Zetland, of Trinity College (M.A. 1815); the Duke of Buccleuch, of St. John's College (M.A. 1837); and Lord Lynchurst, of Trinity College, at present Lord High Steward of the University. The following gentlemen have been Chancellors of the University of Cambridge since 1688:—Charles, Duke of Somerset, Trinity College, elected 1688; Thomas Holles, Duke of Newcastle, Clare College, elected 1748; Augustus Henry, Duke of Grafton, St. Peter's College, elected 1768; his Royal Highness William Frederick, Duke of Gloucester, Trinity College, elected 1811; John Jeffries, Marquis Camden, Trinity College, elected 1834; Hugh Percy, Duke of Northumberland, St. John's College, elected 1840; his Royal Highness the Prince Consort, Trinity College, elected 1847.

THE TRADE MURDER AT SHEFFIELD.—The inquiry into the circumstances attending the death of Bridget O'Rourke, by the explosion of a case of gunpowder thrown through the window into a dwelling-house in Sheffield, was resumed before Mr. Webster, the Deputy Coroner, on Wednesday week, at the Townhall, Sheffield. George Wastnidge, the person against whom the attack was directed, and the husband of the other woman who was seriously injured, was examined. He stated that he was a stove, grate, and fender grinder, working for Mr. Hoole, of Green-lane, who first employed him in June last, in consequence of other men turning out. He had at the time been nearly two years out on strike himself, and was glad of a good situation with regular work. He was shortly after mobbed, and obliged to run home to escape. The men who followed him said that he deserved to be murdered for taking work at Hoole's, and several of them said that if they could get hold of him they would "do his job." Thompson, the prisoner, and his wife, were by at the time. The latter said that Wastnidge should be burnt, and would be burnt before long. A few weeks after the witness went to Mr. Hoole's, Bagshaw, keeper of a co-operative store and the secretary of the Sawgrinders' Trades Union, and Broadhead, the keeper of the Royal George Tavern and president of the Associated Trades of Sheffield, asked him and other men working at Green-lane to meet them at a public-house. An interview took place, when Wastnidge and his fellow-workmen were asked to name a sum which would induce them to leave their employment. Several offers were on other occasions made and rejected. At last an agreement was come to that they were to have £10 a man. This sum was not paid, however, and they remained in their employment. At the last interview they heard Broadhead say that they must come out whatever the consequences were. The witness, after making these statements, described what took place on the 23rd ult., without adding any fact of importance to those previously mentioned. The inquiry was again adjourned, Mrs. Wastnidge, although recovering, not being yet able to appear before a jury.

COMMANDER WILLIAMS ON THE OUTRAGE ON BOARD THE TRENT.—The members of the Royal Western Yacht Club last week entertained Commander Williams, who is a member of the club, to dinner, at Plymouth, and, in reply to the toast of his health, he gave some details of the occurrences on board the Trent when overhauled by the Federal ship the *San Jacinto*. His reference to the distorted accounts of the affair which had appeared in America. One paper asserted that "if the act itself was justifiable the manner in which it was performed was unexceptionable." The facts plainly told would lead to a widely-different conclusion. When he was told that a suspicious vessel had come in sight, little dreaming of what was to happen, he was on the main deck, smoking a pipe and reading the "Essays and Reviews." A few minutes afterwards the Trent hoisted her ensign, but this signal was not responded to. As they approached the *San Jacinto* a shot was fired across their bows. They then put the helm astarboard and approached the Federal ship. They were not a cable's length from her when a shell was fired across their bows; and that was the manner of exercising the right of search which had been referred to by the American press as unexceptionable. Again, it was stated by the American papers "that Captain Wilks could not have received instructions from his Government at Washington, for that he was on his return from the western coast of Africa." That was not the case. On the night of the 16th of October, or on the morning of the 17th, he saw the *San Jacinto* off St. Thomas. On his return to Havannah on the 6th of November he found that the *San Jacinto* had been to Havannah from St. Thomas, that she had coaled there, and that two of her officers, passing themselves off as Southerners in their hearts, had lunched with Mr. Siddell and family, and extracted from them their intended movements. Miss Siddell branded one of the officers to his face with his infamy, having been her father's guest ten days before. Mr. Fairfax had denied that the marines made a rush towards Miss Siddell at the charge with fixed bayonets. He knew that his hearers would believe they did when he laid his hand on his heart and said it was true that they had done so. He had been accused of gasconade. Certainly when the marines rushed on at the point of the bayonet he had just time to put his body between their bayonets and Miss Siddell, and to order them back as cowardly poltroons; but he had bullied no one. After giving other details of the scene on board the Trent and subsequent events since his arrival in England, where he received the approbation of the Government, Commander Williams resumed his seat amid much applause.

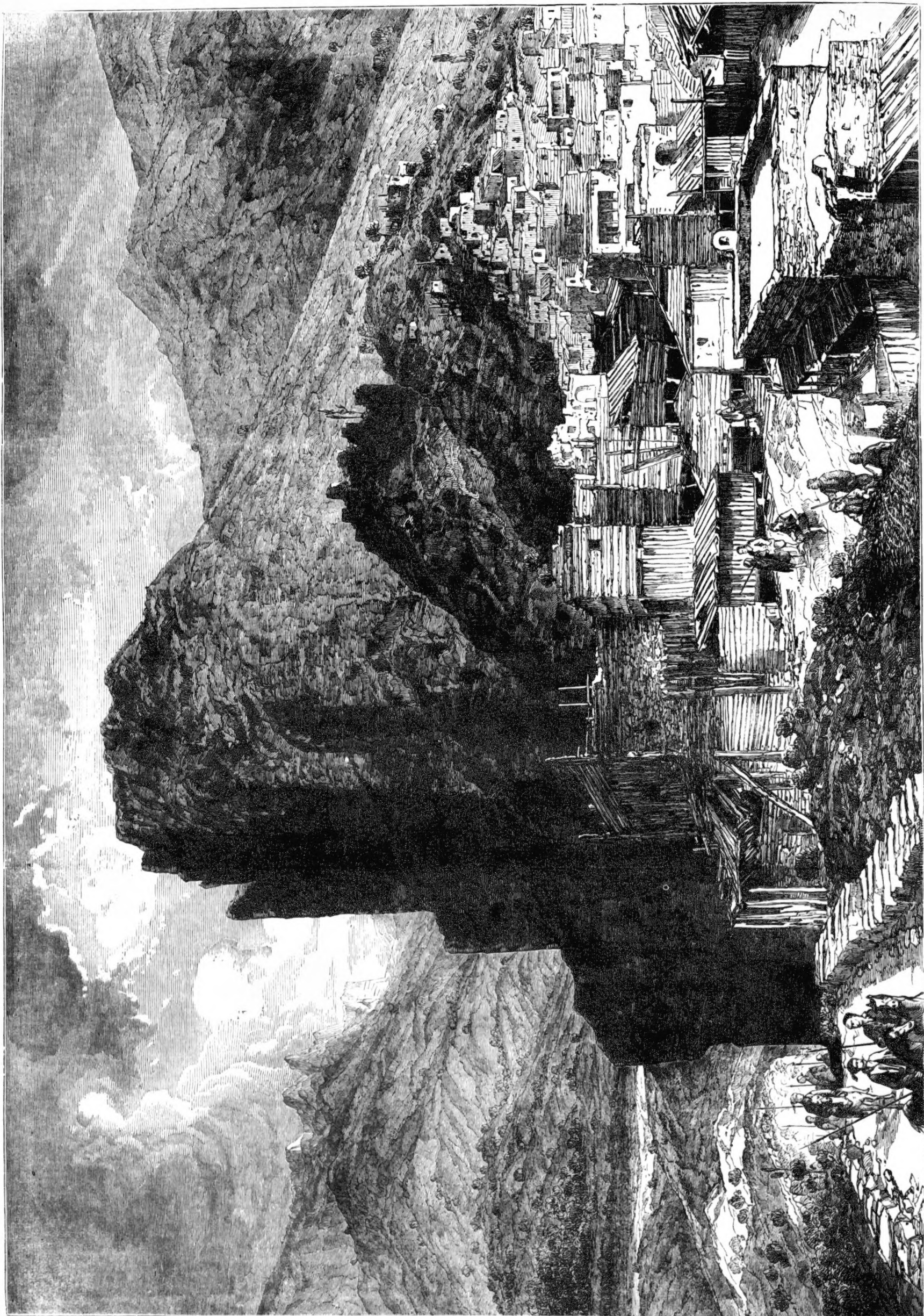
THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE.—All the American ships of war, except one sailing-vessel, have been withdrawn from the coast of Africa, in consequence of which cargoes of slaves are shipped for Cuba wholesale. The British cruisers are not permitted to capture vessels, although full of negroes, so long as the American flag is flying on board; and the result is a most flourishing state of the traffic by American ships.

MONTENEGRO.

THE two corps d'armée which have been marched against the mountaineers by Omer Pacha were intended, one to compel the enemy to retire to the Black Mountains, and the other to restrain the hostile excursions of the Albanians.

The Montenegrins, however, assumed the offensive and compelled the Turkish troops to retire upon Trebigne. Devis Pacha, who took up his position at the foot of the mountain, made continual attempts to allure the mountaineers into the plain by means of pretended advances of small bodies of men; but they are not so easily to be deceived by the very tactics which they are themselves in the habit of using, and declined to attack the Turks until some obvious advantage led them to leave their defiles. Meanwhile four battalions of the Ottoman troops were completely beaten in a five hours' engagement by the mountaineers of Rondinech, some of the most intrepid of the Montenegrin people who attacked the Turks at Niksh during their march upon Grahovo.

The pass of Rondinech, represented in our Engraving, is situated at some distance from Dunga, and is thoroughly Montenegrin in the wild and rugged beauty of its scenery, while the race who inhabit the district are amongst the boldest warriors of their hardy race. According to the latest reports from Ragusa hostilities have entirely ceased in the Herzegovina. The Turkish troops who were posted at Piva have been distributed among the towns of Gatzko, Lejabinie Stolaz, and Mostar, and the irregular troops have been disbanded.



DEFILE OF ROUDINIEK AT DUNZA, MONTENEGRO. — (FROM A SKETCH BY DOCTOR BAGAN.)



THE IMPROVISATORE.—(FROM A SKETCH BY C. YRIARTE.)

ITALIAN "STROLLERS."—THE IMPROVISATORE.

At this season of the year, when such amusements as are most readily attainable commend themselves to inveterate holiday-makers, the ordinary street mountebank may fairly lay claim to a more than usually indulgent audience. The time-honoured institutions of Punch's show, the vanishing doll, and the hundred tricks and buffoeries which are performed in public, are elevated to a place in the drawing-room, and "professors" of legerdemain, owners of magic lanterns, and even itinerant musicians and showmen sometimes obtain engagements to exhibit their wonderful performances to a juvenile party.

In Italy, however, these "professors," of whom the most popular is named "Pietro Zaccone," combine in their own persons the attributes of musician, showman, impromptu poet, and cicerone. Under the universally-accepted name of "Improvvisatore" (Pietro) is commonly seen with his worn, haggard face and disordered hair and beard, with the image of the Madonna in his Calabrian hat, shaded with peacock's feathers, strumming his mandolin on some of the public promenades, while he chants to the twangling accompaniment some doggerel song on a subject previously borrowed from the experiences of some old lazzarone who has retired from the business.

There is certainly very little of Tasso in his poetic efforts, and he is as much a stranger to the usually-received models of improvisatore as he is to Ariosto himself. His song usually consists of an indifferent string of allusions to the Columbine who accompanies him on the tamborine, or the Clown who sits with a sad smirk upon his features drearily and sometimes unsuccessfully attempting to be funny. Having sung by turns the King, the Dictator, the sbirri, and the Piedmontese guard, his politics are those of Punchinello himself. An indolent gourmand, cheaply intoxicated with the sun in which he basks and the careless life he leads, the public promenade is his country, the porch of San Gennaro his domestic hearth, and Italy his entire world. Even he, however, preserves some show of state; for the Harlequin of his company precedes him, going from street to street announcing to the various loungers that the great Pietro Zaccone is about to commence his *seance*. Then the apprentices amongst the lazzaroni gather about the showman, who, before he exhibits his marionettes, preludes by an air from the mandolin, the notes of which are drowned by his blatant voice and the sweeter tones of Agatha, who joins in the song of her adopted father. Of this same Agatha very little is known save that she possesses a pair of lustrous black eyes and a profusion of beautiful hair; while her father, according to the abominable jocularity of Pietro, was hanged in consequence of his misfortune in being possessed of too light a hand, in consideration of which calamity the benevolent improvisatore represents himself as having adopted the girl, and made over to her the second step or the little porch of San Gennaro. In six months she had attained proficiency on the tamborine, and could talk in the orthodox squeak of Punch without apparent difficulty. In the course of a few years she has attained to all the accomplishments which are necessary to a high position in her public life; has acquired the gracious voice of Columbine; is chief assistant in every phase of their wandering existence—wardrobe-keeper, prima donna, figurante, orchestra, treasurer, and even "clacqueur" of their all fresco theatre of marionettes—and is unequalled for a ready combination of effect which can transform the gauze skirt of Columbine and the tinsel dress of Harlequin into a glaring costume in which to present the part of Cassandra.

OBITUARY.

SIR EDWARD BOWATER.—Sir Edward Bowater died on Saturday evening at Cannes, where he was in attendance on Prince Leopold. The late General, who was in his seventy-fourth year, was the only son of the late Admiral Edward Bowater, of Hampton Court. He entered the 3rd Foot Guards in 1804, and saw much active service with that gallant regiment during the Peninsular War; was also present at the taking of Copenhagen in 1807; and was at the battles of Quatre Bras and Waterloo in 1815. His commissions bore date as follows:—Ensign, March 31, 1804; Lieutenant and Captain, Aug. 23, 1809; Captain and Lieutenant-Colonel, July 25, 1814; Colonel, Oct. 12, 1826; Major-General, Jan. 10, 1837; Lieutenant-General, Nov. 9, 1846; and General, June 29, 1851. Sir Edward was Colonel of the 49th Foot.

COMMISSARY GENERAL FIDLER.—This officer, whose connection with the Crimean War will be in the recollection of all, and who, besides, had seen much service with the Army in the Peninsula and elsewhere during the war with Napoleon, died at St. John's, Exmouth, on the 10th inst., in his seventy-second year.

DR. SOUTHWOOD SMITH.—This distinguished physician died at Florence on the 10th inst., from bronchitis. Dr. Southwood Smith was born at Martock, in Somersetshire, on the 21st of December, 1788, and was therefore at his decease within eleven days of completing his seventy-third year, though from the length of time his name has been before the world he was generally thought much older. The eminent services of Dr. Smith in connection with the visitations of cholera and other epidemics, and his efforts for improving the dwellings of the working-classes, will make his name long remembered among all ranks of society, but especially with those for whose benefit he so long and so indefatigably laboured.

THE BISHOP OF KILLALOE.—The death has just been announced of Lord Riversdale, the aged Bishop of Killaloe, who had been in a dangerous state of health for some time. He was born in 1784, consecrated Bishop of Killaloe in 1839, and succeeded his brother William, as third Baron Riversdale, in 1848.

PRINCIPAL CUNNINGHAM.—The Free Church of Scotland have sustained a serious loss in the death of Dr. William Cunningham, Principal of the New College, Edinburgh, which took place early on Saturday morning, after an illness of ten days, terminating in pleurisy. Dr. Cunningham, who was a native of Berwickshire, died in his sixty-sixth year. About two years ago, on showing indications of failing health, some friends proposed to unite in subscribing to a testimonial of personal esteem for him, and in a few days the sum of £7000 was raised for that purpose. The Rev. Doctor was chosen Moderator of the Free Church Assembly in 1859.

THE BANK OF DEPOSIT.—The examination of the directors of the Bank of Deposit commenced in the Court of Chancery, on Tuesday, before the Master of the Rolls. Lord Keane, the chairman of the company, was under examination during the entire sitting. He stated that when he became connected with the company they advanced him £300, which he immediately invested in stock. He was examined by Mr. Selwyn with reference to the advances which were made to other directors, and the company's transactions with the Imperial Insurance and other companies. His Lordship's examination will be followed by those of other directors. It was announced that the assets were sufficient to pay 3s. in the pound.

ELECTION OF AN ALDERMAN FOR THE WARD OF ALDERGATE.—A ward-mote of the ward of Aldergate was held at Shaftesbury Hall, on Friday week, to elect an alderman in the room of the late Sir Peter Laurie. The Lord Mayor and other officials were present. Mr. Norris, M.P., proposed that Mr. Robert Besley, citizen and joiner, should be elected to fill the vacancy in the Court of Aldermen caused by the death of the late Sir Peter Laurie, to whose eminent services he paid a warm tribute. Mr. Besley, he said, was a gentleman whose ability, intelligence, energy, and business habits eminently fitted him to discharge the duties of alderman; and he was sure that, if elected, Mr. Besley would not only prove a most efficient public officer, but in every respect be an honour and a credit to the ward. The motion having been seconded, and no other candidate being proposed, Mr. Besley was declared duly elected. The Alderman-elect then addressed the meeting, and, in thanking the electors for the honour they had done him, said that, if Mr. Norris had been desirous of standing, he (Mr. Besley) would never have thought of coming forward, as he deemed Mr. Norris's claims upon the ward were so strong that it would have been the worst of taste to have interfered with him. As to himself, he had for years toiled determinedly in business till he had made for himself a position, and earned a right to have a little leisure. But, as he was desirous of being useful to his fellow-citizens, he had looked about for a way in which he could be so; and some few years ago, a vacancy occurring in the representation of the ward in the Common Council, he had offered himself for the office, and had been returned. In that position he had endeavoured as diligently to serve the public as he had exerted himself in the pursuit of his own interests. The honour they had that day conferred upon him showed that he had not been altogether unsuccessful in his efforts to discharge his duty faithfully as a Common Councillor, and he could assure them that he would be no less diligent in the higher office to which the ward had now raised him. After some remarks upon the state of our relations with America, Mr. Besley sat down amid loud cheers, and the meeting broke up.

THE LOUNGER AT THE CLUBS.

THE death of the Prince Consort will not be felt in all its force at present. Indeed, we shall never be able to know the greatness of our loss. His Royal Highness, if we consider it, has been for twenty years *de facto* king of England. Constitutionally, he could not openly appear to exercise any power. In the State he nominally had no place; but it is not to be supposed—it cannot be imagined—that he really exercised no power, or that he had no influence over public affairs. He was the Queen's husband, and, as such, her natural adviser—her councillor; and it is absurd to imagine that her Majesty did not seek, or was not guided by, his counsels. Besides, he was the father of our future King. It was he, in a great measure, that directed the education and moulded by his advice, and still more by his noble example, the character of the Prince of Wales. It is a happy thing for the Prince and the nation that his father did not die earlier. His Royal Highness has now arrived at an age when the fruits of wise training and good example generally show themselves; and it is to be hoped and believed that his character is formed and his course taken. But still the loss of his father just as he is stepping into manhood—just as the great world, with all its fascinations and temptations, is opening before him—must be incalculably great. It was said, I well remember, that when Prince Albert arrived here a dead set was made at him, and a regular plan laid to allure him from fidelity to the Queen, and to entice him to haunts where he would have been fleeced of his money and despoiled of his character; but it was all in vain. His Royal Highness was clad in armour of proof; no opening could be found in his harness; and, after a time, the tempters retired abashed from the field. And what can be said of her Majesty's loss? It is immeasurable. First her mother, now her husband; it is wave upon wave. No occurrence has happened since the death of the Princess Charlotte so profoundly affecting.

Mr. William Cox, of Canonbury square, Islington, and Pinner's Hall, Old Broad-street, solicitor, is again the elect for Finsbury, and as soon as Parliament meets will again walk into the House of Commons with all the pride of a British senator, to beard "the noble Lord at the head of her Majesty's Government," to astonish the House with his historic lore, and do many other wonderful things. Indeed, it is a remarkable result. And when one thinks of Finsbury, with its merchants and bankers, and all the wealthy inhabitants of Russell-square, and Finsbury-square, and Highbury-place, it seems wonderful at first sight how it could happen. But on closer inspection it is not so astonishing, for, be it observed, that out of 20,000 voters over 10,000 did not poll. And that whilst in 1859 Duncombe polled 8538, and Peto 8174, at this election Cox, the winner, polled only 4884. It is clear, therefore, that there was some screw loose amongst the natural opponents of Cox. They did not like Cox; but neither did they like Mills, and so they stood aloof altogether. One reason why Mr. Mills did not get more support, I learn, is this: He is a Dissenter, and so is Sir Morton Peto, and the Church party was not willing to see the borough represented by two Dissenters. And then, again, there were endless jealousies. Mr. Lusk had friends, and Mr. Serjeant Parry had friends, and Mr. Sleigh had friends. And so, in the confusion of these jealousies and quarrels, Mr. Cox has again stepped in. Apart from the man who has been returned, the manner in which it has been done, I should think, deserves commendation. Mr. Mills had been in the field several weeks. He had, regardless of expense, retained agents, organised committees, printed placards, and to a large extent canvassed the borough; and when polling-day came it was found that he had monopolised all the cabs, whereas, on the other hand, Cox had no committee-rooms, no agents, and very few conveyances. In short, Mills let the money fly in all directions, while Cox spent little or nothing, but trusted entirely to the spontaneous action of his friends. Now, this is creditable to both him and his friends, and one is not sorry to see the money-power checked and a wealthy man who hoped to force his way into the House by means of profuse expenditure rebuked. Besides, Mr. Mills is not only a Dissenter, but a dissenting leader—one of "unco goodly," if I may be permitted to use the phrase; and such men ought to be the last to encourage election profligacy. Yes; I know the argument—"If we were not to spend money we should not get into Parliament at all;" but I cannot admit its force. Amongst the old Nonconformists such an argument would not have been listened to for a moment. On the whole, then, one is not sorry for the defeat of Mr. Mills, though it is impossible to rejoice in the success of Mr. Cox.

Can any of your readers tell what those despatches related to which the Indian Government was so anxious to get to London that it chartered a fast steamer and sent it from Bombay to catch the Calcutta mail at Suez? Of great importance they must have been, or the Government would not have incurred an expense of some twelve or fifteen thousand pounds to anticipate the regular mail by a few days. I understand, too, that secrecy was deemed important as well as dispatch, and that, to secure secrecy, no one was allowed to leave the vessel after it arrived at Suez until twenty-four hours after the dispatch of the mail to England. The despatches have, of course arrived, but the intelligence which they contain has not oozed out.

The Peninsular and Oriental Company's ships are all to be armed forthwith. The order is given, and every steamer that leaves Southampton will be armed with four smooth-bore and two Armstrong guns. And no doubt other companies and private firms will follow the examples of the P. and O. And if war should be declared—which Heaven forbid!—we may expect to hear of some pretty running skirmishes. Of course, against regular war-ships these steamers would stand but a small chance; but mere privateers would find them dangerous things to handle.

Parliament was formally prorogued on Tuesday until the 7th of January. It was not, however, announced that it would then meet for dispatch of business. But if bad news should come from America it can be summoned by proclamation. The opinion, however, now is that in such case it will on the 7th be prorogued until the 14th. Of course, her Majesty will not open Parliament in person.

The only speech delivered by a member of Parliament since I last wrote which calls for notice is Mr. Charles Buxton's at Maidstone. Mr. Buxton is not a bad Parliamentary speaker. He is eloquent, and always speaks sensibly; but in the House he lacks vigour and force; and hence, though he is listened to with some attention, he never produces any great impression on his hearers. But his speech at Maidstone, as far as one can judge from reading it, was vigorous and forcible, and from beginning to end instinct with intense earnestness, which at times rose to passion. Indeed, I have seldom read a better speech. Mr. Buxton is not for a hasty declaration of war. He, with great reasoning power, and, as I have said, with intense earnestness, advocates arbitration; and I think it would be very difficult to combat his arguments successfully. By-the-by, I have been asked whether it is usual and constitutional to declare war without submitting the case to Parliament; and I find some difficulty in answering the question. In former times, as we know, the Sovereign often declared war without consulting Parliament; but Parliament has grown so much in power of late that I am inclined to question whether a declaration of war without its having the power to consider the question would now be considered constitutional. When war with Russia was declared Parliament was sitting.

It is gratifying to notice a great improvement in a matter which has been frequently the subject of comment in this column—the non-closing on public occasions of places of amusement which, not being in strictness theatres, were free from the control of the Lord Chamberlain. On Monday last the proprietors of the principal music-halls held a meeting, at which it was unanimously agreed to close their houses both on that evening and on the evening of the funeral

—an act of good taste which deserves a record here, where so much fault has been found with their previous proceedings. It has been a sad week for all amusements, for, though the theatres have been opened since Tuesday, the audiences have been both scant and cold, and there have been but few cases in which the gloom obviously overhanging them has been dispelled. Of course the mortuary vultures, those carrion which fatten on dead men's bones, have been at work, making capital out of the great public loss. Every one will recollect how they plied their loathsome trade at the time of the Duke of Wellington's death with their mementoes and autographs and locks of hair. That the mourning-shops should deck their windows with black and lilac on the strength of the Earl Marshal's announcement was to be expected; but it is a little too much that the pseudo-religious writers should come out with fresh sermons and tracts on the great question of mortality, bearing as a heading some text set forth with ghastly familiarity; that the newspapers should teem with advertisements of sacred songs with such headings as "Resignation," "Christian Submission," "Thy will be done," &c.; and that the *Universal Quick-Step Journal* should recommend the "Dead March in Saul" as an appropriate air for volunteer bands. We endure all the ridiculous ceremonies of a funeral: the stuffy, swaying carriages; the preposterous scarves and hatbands; the drunken, red-nosed mutes; the feathers and the velvet, and all the rest of the ghastly tomfoolery, because we are, to a certain extent obliged; but the rest of the mortuary trade should be discountenanced as much as possible.

Those who believe in the vaticinations of Zadkiel as set forth in his almanack (and their name is legion) are boasting that the death of the Prince Consort was clearly predicted in the Almanack for 1861, published in the November of last year. I have been unable to verify the statement (for so large is the sale of this prophetic work that not a copy is to be found in the Row); but I am assured that in it will be found these words: "This year will be fatal to those born on the 26th of August; among them will be found, I fear, the Prince Consort." And again, in treating of the horoscope of the Prince of Wales, "This year will be fatal to the father of the native." I do not know Mr. Zadkiel, nor have I an interest in the sale of his Almanack, but I think this worth mentioning as a curious fact.

The friends of Mr. Turnbull, late Calenderer of State Papers in the Record Office, who was removed from his situation at the instigation of the Protestant Alliance, are preparing to present him with a pecuniary testimonial of their esteem.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

"Underground London" is the title of the last book published by clever, ready, untiring Mr. Hollingshead, who produces three or four works a year, besides other presswork untellable, and who is as yet as fresh in fancy, as piquant in description, as fond of undertaking odd adventures, educing from them useful truths, and narrating them in sound, honest English, imbued with an occasional quaint querulousness, as when he started in literature some years ago. The present volume, a portion of which appeared in *All the Year Round*, treats of the subterranean sewers, water and gas works, and railways; and it is not only brim full of antiquarian lore, which finds itself next to the newest and most undeniable statistics, but it contains an excellent description of a personal inspection of one of the great sewers by Mr. Hollingshead himself (in the course of which, finding himself immediately under Buckingham Palace, he sung "God Save the Queen" with true loyalty), and of his conversation with the sewer-men. Coming as it does from Mr. Hollingshead's pen, it is needless to say that this little book, which only costs half-a-crown, is graphic, practical, and interesting.

"Tom Tiddler's Ground" is the title of the Christmas number of *All the Year Round*, which contains the usual number and class of stories, though the framework on which they are hung is somewhat new. Mr. Mopes, the owner of Tom Tiddler's Ground, is a wretched misanthrope, who has let every portion of his property go to rack and ruin, and whose great pride lies in considering himself a hermit and in being gazed upon by the people who come to visit him in that capacity. A certain Traveller exhibits much natural disgust at this being, and goes to him, not to stare, but to abuse; to tell him that any man renouncing human decency is a disgrace, and that "it is a moral impossibility that any son or daughter of Adam can stand on this ground that I put my foot on, or on any ground that mortal treads, and gainsays the healthy tenure on which we hold our existence." To prove this doctrine, Mr. Traveller calls upon each visitor to the hermit to tell the story of some episode in his life, and, though each works out as expected, Mr. Mopes is not rescued, but remains in his fith and on his bed of cinders. Two of the stories, "Picking up Waifs at Sea" and "Picking up a Pocket-book," are very good; the first, narrating the difficulties in distinguishing between two children born in the same cabin at the same time on board ship, is specially humorous.

THE THEATRICAL LOUNGER.

MR. WIGAN ceases to be manager of the ST. JAMES'S THEATRE after this week. He has ceased to be lessee for some time, but his managerial services were retained by the present lessee, a private gentleman of property. Mr. George Vining takes his place. Mr. and Mrs. Wigan return to play a two-months' engagement in March next.

To-night (Saturday) is M. Fechter's last night at the PRINCESS' for some two months. M. Fechter will, during part of this period, visit Paris, but will not act there. He will reappear as Iago.

Mr. Boucicault has altered the ending of "The Octoroon" by saving the girl's life, and the piece is greatly improved.

MURDER OF TWO MISSIONARIES IN CHINA.—Letters from Chefoo describe the assistance lent to that place by the French Admiral to save it from the rebels. The rebels had gone eastwards, giving up everything to fire and sword. The scene of their recent visit is said to be frightful beyond description. Their object is extermination, but they indulge in the most atrocious cruelty wherever they are victors. The most unhappy part of this story remains to be told. It appears that two American missionaries had, at an early stage of the proceedings, gone away in the direction of the rebels, either to urge clemency, as some suppose, or to see after the safety of a gentleman, brother to one of the missionaries, who was expected to arrive about that time from Tien-Tsin, whence he was travelling overland. He did arrive safely, but only to find that his brother and his brother's friend had been cruelly put to death by the rebels. The bodies were brought in on the 16th, and they bore undoubted marks of torture. The unfortunate men were Messrs. Parker and Holmes, and the unhappy widow of one of them was at Chefoo when the tragedy occurred.

WARLIKE PREPARATIONS.—The utmost activity still prevails in all the public departments connected with the fitting out and dispatch of troops, munitions of war, &c., to Canada. Several first-class steamers have already sailed, and several others are being prepared. The first and second battalions of the Scots Fusilier Guards have got the route and will immediately be forwarded to Canada. Very large quantities of small arms, as well as Armstrong guns and ammunition, are being shipped, each vessel taking out several tons of such materials, as well as detachments of men. If the St. Lawrence only remains open when the ships being dispatched arrive, the Yankees will find the province well prepared to meet and repel any attempt they may make upon it.

THE MILITIA OF CANADA.—The militia of Canada, as at present organised, is under the command-in-chief of the Governor-General, and has a Staff of an Adjutant-General for each province, with two Provincial Aides-de-Camp and a Quartermaster-General. It consists of two divisions, known as the "Active" and the "Sedentary." There are 16 batteries of artillery, 16 troops of cavalry designated as class A, 12 troops of class B, 62 companies of rifles, and several corps of light infantry. In Lower Canada there are 42 battalions and in Upper Canada 47 battalions of "Sedentary" militia. The Canadian rifles are regularly enrolled troops, and act with the Queen's regiments stationed at Toronto, Montreal, and Quebec. The militia has shown that it can be relied upon in times of emergency. In addition to these there is a considerable force of volunteers in both provinces.

JUVENILE LITERATURE.

Little Bird Red and Little Bird Blue. A Tale of the Woods. By M. BETHAM EDWARDS. Illustrated by T. R. Macquoid.
Paul Duncan's Little by Little. A Story for Young Folks. Edited by FRANK FREEMAN.
Great Fun for our Little Folks. By the Author of "The Voyage of the Constance." Illustrated by Edward H. Wehnert.
The Children's Picture-book of the Sagacity of Animals. Illustrated by Harrison Weir. Published by Sampson Low, Son, and Co.

These books for young people, and very young people, are all excellent of their kind, and calculated to diffuse much that is valuable besides wholesome amusement; which, by-the-way, is an article not always to be obtained, and of more value than many austere mamma's imagine. The morals of such dismal romances as "Tom and Harry," in which the naughty boy of the drama is punished by being gobbled up by a lion at the corner of the street, are speedily derided by children who have learnt anything worth the knowing, and too frequently the sensible morals will be flung away with the silly. The terrifying system of lions and bogies,

The poisonous names with which our youth is fed, can only produce the ill effects of reckless disregard, or inspiring horror frequently verging on insanity. The modern style of juvenile literature is of the most healthy kind. Miss Edwards's little volume, "Little Bird Red and Little Bird Blue," is written in verse, and translated with some alterations, from the German of an unknown author. The verse is written with graceful ease, is perfectly simple, and always reaches the poetic mark requisite for the purpose. It tells the stories of the loves of birds and of flowers; with which some passages of juvenile human nature are mingled, and the prettiest morals gently hinted, instead of being hurled at the head. The love of all the things that God has made is the foundation of the drama—for drama it claims to be, being divided into acts and scenes, and conducted in dialogue. It ends, of course, happily. The book is magnificently printed, every page having an engraved border, whilst the coloured pictures of birds and flowers and scenery, by Mr. Macquoid, are numerous, and executed with most praise-worthy effect.

"Paul Duncan's Adventures" form a story which all boys will admire, and which has the charm of not being too long. Paul is a splendid fellow, who, at the age of fourteen, his father being suddenly killed, works as a boatman and fisherman and supports his widowed mother and family in reasonable comfort. He has the good fortune to save the little daughter of Captain Littleton; he advances in the world, has opportunities of showing how a resolute man may work his way "little by little" in fortune if not into fame, and is finally rewarded by being loved and esteemed by all, and by marrying the young lady whose life he had saved when only a poor fisher-boy. But, familiar as this kind of plot may appear to be, the book is thoroughly fresh. Neither is there anything "mawkish" about it; on the contrary, it is full of boisterous, hearty action; full of coast life and ocean exploits; and is evidently written by one who can handle a sail, a tiller, or a scull as dexterously as he can wield a pen. It is sure to be admired.

"Great Fun for our Little Folks" is of a totally different stamp. It is for the smallest of readers, and principally consists of children's parties, of the fun, noise, damage, mischief, and, in fact, "house-od of windows" that are invariably to be enjoyed on such occasions. The writer has happily drawn children from the life, and the most lifelike are always the most unruly. The book is really "great fun," although it has the terrible effect of reminding us of "the days that are no more"—when we, too, spun pegtops in drawing-rooms, shot crafty arrows into neighbouring pigs, and generally contrived to be the terror of the neighbourhood and the nuisance of our friends. Mr. Wehnert's illustrations are full of humour; the indiarubber doll is delicious; but we must ask why he makes the children's heads of so preposterous a size?

Such a title as "The Picture-book of the Sagacity of Animals" at once explains itself. This is a goodly volume of nearly 300 pages, containing as many anecdotes, all of the most attractive and interesting kind, and decorated with sixty of Mr. Harrison Weir's much-admired sketches. There must be a good market for so entertaining a book for childhood and youth.

MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES IN NEW YORK.—The nominating committee of taxpayers of New York have recently issued an appeal to the citizens on the state of the municipal government of that city, in which they say:—"We regret to say that the idle and irresponsible classes have, for several years, taken the most active part in our city elections, and thus persons have been elevated to power who have rendered office a reproach and conferred nothing but disgrace on this important city. If you can have an enlightened, efficient, and upright Government, there is a great future before you and your children; but if fraud and robbery, population and debt, are to govern our city, the history of cities and states in past ages tells us we cannot be either prosperous or happy." A very pretty state of things, truly.

PARADES OF ITALIAN LEGISLATORS.—Several duels are said to have been already arranged, arising out of the recent debate in the Italian Chamber. Spaventa, the unpopular Neapolitan police minister, has challenged Dr. Bertani, and the latter having declined the invitation, Crispi, one of the leaders of the revolution in Sicily and Naples, has insisted on taking his place. Nicotera, who only the other day fought a duel, has likewise challenged Spaventa; and, indeed, the latter seems likely soon to have a list of challenges as long as Mirabeau used to hold.

A WINTER'S MARCH IN CANADA.—The following account of the accessibility of Canada to reinforcements in winter is given by Lord James Butler in an Irish paper:—"During the month of November, 1857, at the time of the Canadian outbreak, three regiments—viz., the 43rd, the 85th, and one other, the number of which I do not remember, were dispatched from Halifax, Nova Scotia, and St. John's, New Brunswick, to Quebec, via Fredericton, Presqu'île, Madawaska, Lake Temisconata, and St. André, on the St. Lawrence, which river was reached in about seven days from St. John's, New Brunswick. The 43rd marched a portion of the way on snowshoes, the ice on Lake Temisconata not being considered safe; the others went in sleighs, the second division of the 85th being accompanied by two guns. Log huts had been erected at several points in the forest for the accommodation of the troops. The winter not having thoroughly set in made the passage difficult for the earlier divisions of the troops, but to the 85th the transit was a most agreeable sleighing party. There was with them but one casualty; a private, most unfortunately, had obtained access to a spirit-cask, had drunk freely, and in the morning was found frozen to death outside the hut. The passage of Lake Temisconata was somewhat perilous, but was achieved in safety. Three of the sleighdrivers, however, on their return missed their way during a storm on the lake, and were found dead from the severity of the weather. Having 'struck' the St. Lawrence, our difficulties, if they could be so called, were over. We marched up the right bank, halting at different villages, and meeting with the most loyal reception from the French Canadians. The appearance of the 4th division, of first-rate soldiers in the highest health, eager for action, and the two guns by which we were accompanied, which created an immense sensation, scarcely warranted by their calibre, possibly had something to say to the cordiality of our reception. The passage of the St. Lawrence was made in large boats provided for the purpose, and was effected in safety. The large masses of floating ice, which threatened at one moment to crush us, the shouts of the boatmen, who occasionally jumped out to fend off the boats, at other times paddling as if for their lives, their encouragement of and their swearing at one another in their most unimpaired patois, made the scene as exciting as it was novel. When the thermometer was at the lowest, 17 deg. below zero, we suffered little from cold, the weather being brilliant and quite still. At a later period, near Quebec, when the quicksilver was not much below freezing, the wind being high, the feeling of cold was intense. This slight account of a winter's march by one of the then officers of the 85th may at this time prove interesting to some of your readers."

QUEBEC.—An American paper says:—"Taking Quebec garrisons and the Upper Town into just consideration, it may be deemed one vast fortress—cannon, soldiers, shot, and shell meeting you at every turn. Even old cannon are used as posts in common in Upper Town. It is to all intents and purposes a complete fortification, and to have a just conception of its strength and impenetrability, it must be seen. The militia of Quebec, like the militia throughout Canada, are continually drilling."

LAW AND CRIME.

THE great Windham case, for some time heralded by flourishes in the journals, took a tangible form on Monday last—namely, that of a commission of lunacy, of which the first sitting was held in the Exchequer Court, before Mr. Samuel Warren, Q.C., Commissioner of Lunacy. At the time at which we write the case is yet undecided, and we should hesitate to give the exparte statements on behalf of the allegation of lunacy were it not that we scarcely believe, granting these to be true, that they go sufficiently far to justify the petition. Taking the yet uncontradicted opening statement of Mr. Montagu Chambers, confirmed by his witnesses, we should pronounce Mr. Windham to be less a lunatic than what is commonly known as a booby. At the early age of four young Windham, being suspected of intense stupidity, was brought under the notice of a surgeon, who predicted that as he grew older the state of his intellect would not improve. When a boy he "was fond of low company and low pursuits. He wished to wait at table and wash the dishes." This is singular enough; but it is yet more singular to find that his father so far accommodated himself to his son's desires as to have him, at his own request, fitted with a footman's livery. Who was the more eccentric here—the parent or the infant child? The child went to school for the first time at nine years of age. At school he was dirty and nasty in his habits and conversation, like most loutish boys. Like them, he seemed to be a born liar, unable to distinguish the excellence or advantage of telling the truth. He gobbled his food. He was cruel to animals. He would slobber at the mouth and blubber when reproved. He would drive furiously and associate with serving-men, railway-porters, and stokers. He would eat after repletion, and terminate his meals by rejection after swallowing, regardless of place or company. On attaining his majority he contracted marriage with a woman of loose character, who stipulated for a settlement and paraphernalia under the circumstances which we last week recorded, who is said to have loathed him, and who the day after marriage deserted him to enjoy the fortune which he had bestowed upon her. He was in the habit of inducing railway-drivers to allow him to take the command of railway excursion-trains—in which the lives of passengers were perhaps considered as of little consequence—and purchased for his amusement a railway-whistle, wherewith to solace his domestic life. But supposing all these statements to be true, where is the lunacy? In ancient days the Roman Emperor Commodus was wont, in like manner, to drive a cart, to practise as a costermonger and prizefighter, and to imitate the lowest sporting "gents" of his period. His subjects, instead of accusing him of lunacy, accounted for the vulgarity of his tastes rationally enough, though by no means creditably so far as regarded one of his parents. A century and a half since Swift delineated the character assigned to young Windham in his "Captain" in the poetical sketch anent Hamilton's Bawn. What had in Rome caused an Imperial assassination, in England then furnished field for satire. Goldsmith, in his Tony Lumpkin, hit off many of Windham's alleged salient points. But that these two authors should thus have drawn the respective characters, shows that these points were not then considered as indicative of madness. Are fools never to inherit property or to be allowed to control their estates? Are they never to marry except with virtuous ladies of good family? Where is the line to be drawn? Dr. Johnson gobbled his food. Our betting noblemen associate on almost equal terms with grooms, jockeys, prizefighters, and the very scum of the lazy world; why not with footmen and railway-guards? Our degraded, mis-called comic vocalists black their faces and imitate railway-trains, to the delight of silly gentlemen; why may not a silly gentleman imitate them in turn? How is the amount of intellect required for the possession of property to be fixed? All these are questions requiring some nicety of solution; but that power which some pious folks term Providence and others the "doctrine of compensation" settles the matter in a trenchant way, by ordaining that property acquired without merit should be scattered without wisdom. Give all the wealth of England to fools, and wiser men will soon find how to grow rich. But, were all the riches in the hands of the wise, the poor fools might starve helplessly. Brains are the inheritance of an intellectual oligarchy, who are compelled by circumstances or by duty to exercise them; and it is surely going too far to say that a man is not to have the control of mere pecuniary estate because he has bad habits and selects for a wife a woman who is known to the police, and whom nothing but his money can induce to remain under his roof for twenty-four hours.

Lloyd's Weekly News, a well-known paper, has this week been defendant in an action at the suit of one "Stubbs" for libel. Stubbs is the head of a trade protection society, and prosecuted for the following libel, which appeared in the columns of *Lloyd*:—

DAGGERS IN THE DARK.

We are overwhelmed with letters from indignant correspondents complaining of the doings of Messrs. Stubbs, Perry, and Co. An Italian gentleman is especially struck with this anomaly in "free England." He asks whether we shall suffer that—in this land of freedom, of justice, and of hospitality—men's reputations shall be silently and secretly assailed, and that "black mail" shall be levied on the timid. Tradesmen or professional men who happen to owe even the most trifling sums may find themselves in one of these black lists—Mr. Perry's, for instance. "A weekly private list, for subscribers only," with this caution under the title—viz., "the information herein being strictly confidential, subscribers are reminded that it must neither be shown nor communicated to any other person." This artful warning is intended to create subscribers. Mr. Perry expects his annual £3. 3s. for the information his circular affords. It is clear that the calculations of these trade protectors are based upon the fears as well as the meanness of their customers. There are tradesmen who will condescend to patronise a spy in the hope that he may now and then lead them from danger. On the other hand, there are foolish men who fear the lash of the protector. They are afraid that, not subscribing, they may be inserted as "no good; not very wise to go into business with such people;" whereas a little subscription puts them forward as "good people, very respectable, and with good business." It is easy to perceive the tyranny the conductors of a persecuting system of this description may exercise, not over wealthy tradesmen, but over the poor and struggling man, who may be ruined by an evil word. It is enough that we have secret police-offices springing up in our midst, without suffering the degradation of surveillance by the bravo who holds a dagger in one hand and a subscription form in another. It is the bounden duty of every honourable man to help to put an end to this disgraceful system of espionage. The laws are strong enough to punish offenders. There is ample security openly offered to every man's house by the police—he needs no skulking detectives on his threshold. But tradesmen are not alone concerned in putting aside these daggers in the dark. Men of all degrees are infected by them. They strike at the practice of the young doctor; they lay bare the passing difficulties of the student. All classes, therefore, should "take action." Tradesmen should decline to be "protected," and customers should refuse to deal with any of the subscribers to private lists.

The plaintiff, who was called to prove his case, figured thus in his cross-examination:—

Cross-examined by Mr. Serjeant Ballantine—I want my subscribers to give us the names of persons who are supposed to be swindlers, and we investigate the cases. I have eight or nine agents in London. I pay them by salary.—Mr. Ballantine—What do these gentlemen get for hunting out information? Witness—From £150 to £200 a year.—Mr. Ballantine—Well, when one of these well-paid gentlemen catches a swindler for you, what do you do with him? Witness—We publish his name.—Mr. Ballantine—That is, an out-and-out swindler. What do you do with a half-and-half one? Witness—We keep him in our register.—Mr. Ballantine—Until he is full blown—(laughter)—and then you publish him? Witness—Yes.—Mr. Ballantine—You publish the autographs of swindlers? Witness—Yes.—Mr. Ballantine—And you go to further expense for the commercial community. You publish photographs of swindlers? (Laughter.) Witness—We do, Sir.—Mr. Ballantine—Now, what do you call your legal agents? Witness—That refers to the collection of debts. I mean solicitors who attend to the business of subscribers on the terms mentioned in the prospectus.—Mr. Ballantine—Oh! then you are also a debt-collector? Witness—I am a debt-collector, through 700 solicitors.—Mr. Ballantine—Gracious! do you keep 700 solicitors, and yet the world continues to exist? Do you keep them or do they keep you? Witness—I suppose they keep themselves.

No witnesses were called for the defence, which rested entirely upon

the answers elicited in cross-examination, the clear merits of the case, and a speech by defendant's counsel. The Lord Chief Baron summed up lucidly and distinctly, as follows:—

The press of this country was entirely free, and if it published anything regarded as questionable, and a remedy were sought in a civil or criminal court, it would be for the jury alone to decide that point. The proprietor of a newspaper could not complain if comments were made on the conduct of his journal. The idea that the intelligence which plaintiff circulated was secret because it was only sent to 20,000 subscribers was a farce. He could not see any objection to the plaintiff's *Gazette*, if it were limited to the publication of what was directed to be registered somewhere by the Legislature; but he did not think that any person would be justified in publishing the names of those persons who had pawned articles, though that might be, in some instances, a guide to credit. He could not justify the practice under which A could complain of B, and then B should be placed under the surveillance of 700 attorneys. He could not say that this system of spying behind a man's back might not lead to considerable mischief, and certainly it deserved no encouragement. But the only question for them was, not as to the conduct of *Stubbs' Gazette*, but as to the spirit in which the paragraph complained of had been written. Was it a fair comment on a public man? And here he would say that, in using the word fair, it should be used with a large and liberal indulgence to the rights of the public journals to comment on public men. Juries owed certainly very much of their freedom to the press; but juries were not independent because the press was free, but the press was free because juries were independent. They would say whether this article had been written in a spirit of fair criticism.

The enlightened jury returned a verdict for the plaintiff, damages one farthing. We comment neither upon the conduct of plaintiff nor defendant, whose respective cases we have set before the public. But this decision of the jury is simply ludicrous. It says that the comments were unfair and unjustifiable, and then gives a man a farthing for being unfairly and unjustifiably branded as that most detestable of characters, "a spy," as "a skulking detective," "a tyrant," and a "bravo" using "daggers in the dark." If a public writer may unfairly do all this for a farthing, a clever satirist may go about as far as the sixth satire of Juvenal for fourpence. Perhaps a modest halfpennyworth of ridicule might be charitably bestowed upon the obstinate wrongheadedness of a jury who after the explicit summing-up of the Lord Chief Baron, could deliver such a verdict as that presented in this case.

Mary Newell, the servant-girl who absconded in male attire after robbing her master's house in Pinlico, has been sentenced to hard labour for eighteen months.

MONEY OPERATIONS OF THE WEEK.

ALTHOUGH the President of the United States has made no allusion whatever to the security of the dollar, and the fact is that in his hands appear to be of opinion that we are rapidly drifting into a war with America. The result is that great inactivity has prevailed in the market for National Securities this week, and that prices have had a downward tendency. Very little stock has been purchased for money, and the operations for time have been on a restricted scale. The leading quotations for the week are as follow:—Consols for Transfer, 89½; D. 100, for Time, 90 to 100; Reduced and New 3 per Cent, 89½; Exchequer Bills, March, 90, to 120; Ditto, June, 120 to 125, prem.

Indian Securities have been comparatively steady, owing to the favourable monetary outlook from Calcutta. The Five per Cent. have marked 102½; India Bonds, 120 to 125, prem. Rupee Paper has sold at 90 and 100; India Stock, for Account, has realised 22½; the Bankers have found buyers at 84½.

About 500,000 in bullion have been landed from various quarters since we last wrote, and several large parcels have been sent into the Bank of England.

No change of importance has taken place in the Continental exchange; but the quotations for bankers' bills at New York has declined to 108½/109. The prices are against shipments of bullion from the other side.

In the Foreign Bond market, no material change has been transacted, and prices have ruled low. Brazilian Four and Half per Cent. have realised 86½; Buenos Ayres Six per Cent, 88; Equador New Consolidated, 25½; Mexican Three per Cent, 25½; Peruvian Four and a Half per Cent, 26½; Russian Four and a Half per Cent, 91½; Ditto, 1890, 89; Russian Three per Cent, 90; Spanish Three per Cent, 50½. Ditto Certificates, 50½; Turkish Six per Cent, 70½. Ditto, 1888, 66½; Turkish Four per Cent, 61½; and Venezuela Three per Cent, 21½.

Joint-stock Bank Shares have been dealt in to a limited extent. London Chartered, Australia, New, have realised 18½ ex div.; London Joint stock, 22½; Oriental, 49; Ottoman, 7½; and Union of London 57½.

Canada Bonds have further declined in value, and other Colonial Government Securities have been largely discounted. Canada Six per Cent, 1890-2, have sold at 65; ditto, 1891-2, 65½; ditto, 1892-3, 65½; ditto, 1893-4, 65½; ditto, 1894-5, 65½; ditto, 1895-6, 65½; ditto, 1896-7, 65½; ditto, 1897-8, 65½; ditto, 1898-9, 65½; ditto, 1899-0, 65½; ditto, 1900-1, 65½; ditto, 1901-2, 65½; ditto, 1902-3, 65½; ditto, 1903-4, 65½; ditto, 1904-5, 65½; ditto, 1905-6, 65½; ditto, 1906-7, 65½; ditto, 1907-8, 65½; ditto, 1908-9, 65½; ditto, 1909-0, 65½; ditto, 1910-1, 65½; ditto, 1911-2, 65½; ditto, 1912-3, 65½; ditto, 1913-4, 65½; ditto, 1914-5, 65½; ditto, 1915-6, 65½; ditto, 1916-7, 65½; ditto, 1917-8, 65½; ditto, 1918-9, 65½; ditto, 1919-0, 65½; ditto, 1920-1, 65½; ditto, 1921-2, 65½; ditto, 1922-3, 65½; ditto, 1923-4, 65½; ditto, 1924-5, 65½; ditto, 1925-6, 65½; ditto, 1926-7, 65½; ditto, 1927-8, 65½; ditto, 1928-9, 65½; ditto, 1929-0, 65½; ditto, 1930-1, 65½; ditto, 1931-2, 65½; ditto, 1932-3, 65½; ditto, 1933-4, 65½; ditto, 1934-5, 65½; ditto, 1935-6, 65½; ditto, 1936-7, 65½; ditto, 1937-8, 65½; ditto, 1938-9, 65½; 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WINTER.



CHRISTMAS STORYTELLING.—THE LAUGHABLE STORY.—(DRAWN BY PHIZ.)

THE LAUGHABLE STORY, AND THE TERRIBLE STORY.

HAPPY is he who has attained the reputation of a good storyteller; for Christmas to him means a time of general welcome, especially amongst the younger branches of such families as he may

have the good fortune to visit. There are few more enviable positions than that of the bachelor uncle, who, with a real, honest love for children, has studied the means whereby he can interest them and draw them round his knees to listen to a thorough good piece of fun on a night at Christmas tide. Warm shall be his

welcome, prolonged his stay, and sadly regretted his departure, if he believe the expressions which are evoked from his little friends on each of these occasions. The ability to tell a good story is an art which is superior to most ordinary acquirements.

The man who can sing a good roaring carol, or who can play



THE TERRIBLE STORY.—(DRAWN BY PHIZ.)

sweetly on the flute, or accompany on the piano, or strike up dance music on the fiddle, may have a high place in holiday society; but what, after all, is his accomplishment, or the accomplishment of all put together, to that of the narrator of a funny adventure? In the first place, he excites nobody's jealousy. The fact of his having heard, or read of, or experienced, an extraordinary combination of circumstances, which fall quite naturally into an amusing narrative, is no proof whatever of his personal superiority. Anybody might have been in the same position if it had only happened so. And then, of course, they would have had a story. The ability to tell it is certainly something, but the chief difficulty is that of the needy knife-grinder, that of having no story to tell.

Now, your musician or your jovial soul giving out conviviality in song may excite the dislike of the envious, or may happen to fall in with a company where there is very little taste for music. The story-teller supersedes all ill-feeling by the interest of his tale; the individual who can take no pleasure in a capital joke, or even a terrible adventure, deserves to be shut out from general society altogether.

Talking of terrible adventures, it is by no means certain that the fearful story has not a decided advantage over the laughable one; there is such an enchainment of interest, especially amongst our young audiences; such a mingling of reverence for the narrator, as though he or she were a being a little out of the common order, to whom had befallen strange experiences, and by whose means previously unheard-of combinations had been effected. The youthful mind regards with very considerable respect the actor in mysterious events; and as well as laugh the hero of a humorous tale might be laughed at as perhaps laughed with, the aunt who unfolds to her astonished hearers the "true account of that extraordinary affair at Longwood," or "the story which only came to her knowledge long after the principal actors in it were dead," revels in all the pleasure attendant upon a position of unalterable confidence and sincere veneration.

Humorous or terrible, let us hope that the good and the true may form the principal moral of all Christmas tales, and that the recollection of them may be amongst the pleasant memories that belong to the childhood of the generation which are now growing up around us.

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ILLUSTRATED TIMES.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1861.

A NATIONAL AFFLICTION.

THE grief of the Royal family of England finds instantaneous sympathy in the hearts of all classes of the English people. When the last sad news, which now all know, was promulgated, there was not one truly English heart, however humble, which did not feel the loss which was told as that of a chief member of the great national household. The depression as of a sudden calamity was apparent even in the faces of the passengers in the streets.

It has been for some centuries, till lately, a vicious custom to seize upon the occasion of the death of an illustrious personage for the outpouring of frantic, fulsome eulogy. A hundred years ago, and upon such an occasion as the death of an English Prince, the magazines would have overflowed with elegies and epithalamiums lauding "Augustus," and representing half the Pagan mythology as weeping over the tomb of the departed. We have outgrown these puerilities, and can now speak of the yet unburied great ones of our land, not in the style of inflated, artificial panegyric, but of just appreciation, and, when deserved, of cordial sympathy and affectionate reminiscence.

Few men of our day have so completely and so ardently won the confidence, respect, and estimation of the English nation as the late Prince Consort. His part has been one of the most difficult; for, while others have fought their way upwards by clapping spurs to their ambition, he, having the good sense to perceive that the course most required of him was that of self-restraint, had the discretion and the strength to follow this implicitly, and thereby to secure for his name a place among the honoured and beloved in England's annals. To a dull or an indolent man this task would have been easy enough. But the Prince Consort is universally acknowledged to have been one of the most accomplished, and, what is more, one of the most thoroughly well-educated, gentlemen of his age. His sterling good sense, which would probably have done equally good service had the course of events directed its aims differently, led him to acquiesce in his position as one totally distinct in its requirements from that of a politician, however powerful. The Prince was content to take the lead where his aid was alone desired—in the advancement of the arts, science, and social progress of the country of his adoption. Under his direction the Court of England maintained that high moral status which has marked it since the accession of Victoria as a virgin Queen; a character which Courts have seldom exhibited at home, and which might be advantageously imitated abroad under Royalties upon which its bright example has not yet exercised its healthy influence. To Prince Albert chiefly we owe our hope of the future internal peace and constitution of England. In our own day scarcely a Conservative could hope to save the Monarchy under the repetition of the evil example, the incompetence, the debauchery, and the misrule which have been exhibited from the Throne within the memory of men yet living. No Englishman fears that within the coming generation his country may again have to pass through such an ordeal or that revolution may again have to be staved off by bribery of venal scribblers to divert popular animosities into foreign warfare. The present Royal Princes and Princesses have been brought

up not merely under the eye of the tutor, but under the direct personal and constant superintendence of beloved parents. On all hands this much is conceded, that, had the direct mission of Prince Albert been to train up a new Royal family for the glory and honour of England, that mission could not have been more thoroughly, more earnestly, fulfilled, from the commencement until the moment of his untimely and lamented decease. That he was not longer spared to complete his work, and to enjoy its fruition, by beholding his offspring renowned, beloved, and respected in their maturer years, is a national sorrow.

There is another on which we cannot dwell. There is not, perhaps, in all England a husband, wife, or conscious child but laments the anguish of the Royal Lady whose illustrious partner has thus suddenly snatched away, and whose home has thus been desolated. This is a grief in which all may share, for it is one to which every member of the human family has been, or may be, liable. In such a moment consolations are idle wind and condolences mere cant. True, hearty sympathy is the only spontaneous and valuable offering, for it is the only one which Nature suggests. Such sympathy as the whole British nation, from the highest to the lowest, springs forward to offer upon the present occasion may, let us hope and trust, tend to alleviate even the great sadness and deprivation which gives it birth.

SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

LORD PALMERSTON has nearly recovered from the attack of gout under which he has been suffering for some days.

COLONEL W. H. F. CAVENDISH, Groom in Waiting to the Queen, leaves for Cannes immediately to take charge of Prince Leopold, in the place of General Sir Edward Bowater, deceased.

WE HEAR THAT MME. JENNY LIND-GOLDSCHMIDT has recently purchased an estate near London. The members of the Philharmonic Society have resolved to present Madame Lind-Goldschmidt with a testimonial, in the shape, we believe, of a handsome silver vase, in token of their admiration of her talents and character.

THE MARQUESS DEL GATILLO, the husband of Ristori, is dead. The artist was performing in Wiesbaden when she received the news of his death, which occurred in Florence.

GENERAL SCOTT has returned to America, not, as was announced in the Paris papers, in consequence of an urgent despatch from his Government, but, as it is said, in accordance with his sense of duty under the existing change of circumstances.

THE DEFICIT IN THE FRENCH FINANCE appears to increase under scrutiny. It is now asserted to be fifty-four millions sterling, instead of forty millions, as stated by M. Fould.

MR. MASSIE, M.P., will publish the fourth and concluding volume of his "History of England during the Reign of George III." in the course of the ensuing spring.

A YOUNG LADY, of large personal fortune, the daughter of a Monmouth family of good position, has eloped with a servant.

REAR-ADMIRAL SIDNEY C. DAKES, C.B., has been appointed second in command of the North America and West India Squadron. The Edgar, now at Spithead, has been selected to bear the Rear-Admiral's flag.

IT IS REMOVED THAT Major-General Sir Richard Airey, K.C.B., the Quartermaster-General to the Forces, is to assume the command of the troops stationed in Canada.

M. CH. ROGIER, Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, has commenced an action against the *Journal de Bruxelles* for calling him the grandson of the executioner of Arras, and has laid his damages at 10,000fr.

IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT the usual steps will be taken to cause Thursday (the day after Christmas Day) to be kept as a holiday to such an extent as may be practicable at the Stock Exchange and in the City generally.

LORD SHAFTESBURY has patronised a very novel idea—it is called "The Raz-collecting Brigade of the London Ragged Schools."

A PUENNE JUDGESHIP IN INDIA has been offered to Mr. McMahon, M.P. for Wexford, and declined. The appointment is worth £5000 a year, with £1500 for an outfit, but the locality, Agra, is extremely ill-suited to Europeans until they have been acclimatised by early and long residence.

THE last occasion on which the people of England were called upon to put themselves into mourning for the death of a Prince Consort was just one hundred and fifty-three years ago, Prince George of Denmark, the consort of Queen Anne, having died on the 28th of October, 1708; but the easy and placable Prince was socially and politically very much of a cipher.

HAD SIR WILLIAM AHERN accepted the vacant judgeship he would have lost the golden harvest which will flow into his coffers from the fees on patents in connection with the Great Exhibition of 1862. It is estimated that, should the hon. and learned gentleman be lucky enough to remain in office until April next, he will realise £30,000 from this source alone.

MR. ADDERLEY will shortly publish a letter to Mr. Disraeli on the present relations of England with the Colonies.

THE PENINSULAR AND ORIENTAL COMPANY, at a board meeting lately, voted the handsome donation of £50 towards the foundation fund of the City of London College, which now amounts to about £1800.

IN consideration of the youth of the condemned convict Richard Reeve, and the strong recommendation of the jury in his favour, the Secretary of State has felt warranted in advising her Majesty to commute the capital sentence to penal servitude for life.

IN consequence of the recent episcopal changes, arising out of the death of Dr. Wilbers, Bishop of Durham, Dr. Henry Philpott, the Bishop of Worcester, will be entitled to take his seat as a spiritual Peer at the commencement of the next Session of Parliament.

IT IS STATED THAT 8000 barrels, of about 40 gallons each, of the oil from the Pennsylvania springs are now on their way to London. This will be the first large arrival in England.

IT IS SAID THAT during the Emperor of Austria's stay at Venice he ordered all the political prisoners to be set at liberty, with one or two exceptions. The Emperor has returned to Vienna.

MORE RECRUITS have been picked up in Belfast within the last week or ten days than were obtained for six months previously. The Royal Artillery is the favourite corps.

IT IS SAID THAT M. ARMAN, a Bordeaux shipbuilder, has received an order from the Emperor for a dozen boats for landing troops on a system invented by himself.

THE FLOURMILL OF MR. J. CHRISTY at Londonderry has been destroyed by fire. Unhappily, several lives were lost in the catastrophe.

ON WEDNESDAY WEEK a LUNATIC threw himself before a luggage-train which was travelling on the Great Western line, and was killed.

DEERFOOT AND MILLS ran an eight-mile race at Hackney-wick the other day for £200 a side, when, after an exciting contest, the competitors came to the goal so exactly together that the judge could not decide which was first, and declared the race a dead heat.

A VERY IMPORTANT CHANGE is about to be made in the money-order offices of the kingdom. From the 1st of January, 1862, they will be empowered to send £10 instead of a maximum of £5 as heretofore. This will be a great public convenience.

THOMAS JACKSON was convicted at Winchester, last week, of the murder, by shooting, of Sergeant Dickson, and sentenced to be hanged. McCaffery, who shot Colonel Crofton and Captain Hanham at Preston, has also been sentenced to death.

THE CANARD COMPANY'S STEAMER NIAGARA sailed on Saturday for Halifax and Boston. Besides the mails she took out upwards of sixty passengers, and had twenty military officers on board, among whom was Major-General Rumley. She also took out three hundred and fifty soldiers.

IT IS ASSERTED THAT Francis II. will assume the command of the brigades in South Italy early in January.

MR. THURLOW WOOD, an eminent Federal journalist and politician, who is now in London, has addressed a letter to the newspapers, in which he partially admits that Commodore Wilkes was wrong in the course he took in the Trent case, and bespeaks the forbearance and patience of the Government and people of Britain in the affair.

AN AMERICAN SHIP, the *Eliphat Greeley*, put into Brixham on fire last week, part of the crew of which got drunk and mutinied. The fire was ultimately quenched, after considerable damage had been done, and the subordination on board was also suppressed.

A LETTER FROM TENERIFFE gives a very animated description of the gathering of the French fleet destined for the Gulf of Mexico. The fleet assembled in the roadstead of Santa Cruz. It consisted of nine ships of war, with about 3000 soldiers on board. The last ship arrived at the harbour on Nov. 25.

A MR. DUGDALE has just recovered £1000 damages for injuries received in an accident to an excursion-train on the Lancashire and Yorkshire line. There were about one hundred persons injured on the occasion, besides eleven who were killed.

NEWMAN, a labourer at Cherington, wagged that he would drink half a gallon of beer in two minutes. He won his wager, became ill, was turned out of the house, and conveyed to a workhouse, where he was attended by his wife. He died in a stupor a few hours afterwards.

IN YORKSHIRE, the other day, a fugitive hare, pursued by a dog, took refuge in the crinoline of a farm servant. Phoebe, however, was as unfeeling as the cur, and took poor pussy home alive as a prisoner, where execution was soon done upon the captive, and a good dinner was thus provided for the farmer's family.

THE DUBLIN MORNING NEWS has been cast in damages of £50 in an action at the instance of the Sheriff of Ulster for stating that that official unduly favoured Protestants in the empanelment of juries to try causes within his jurisdiction.

THE DUKE OF MALAKOFF, having, as he conceived, been received in a slighting manner by the Governor of Valencia on arriving there lately, behaved in an insulting manner to the former. The Emperor has since expressed to the Queen of Spain his regret at the occurrence. The Duke took offence because the salute with which he honoured the Spanish flag was not returned,—the reason being that there were no guns in Valencia to return it with, an explanation which the Marshal refused to hear, and hence the occurrence.

TWENTY-EIGHT PERSONS, dressed as carabineers, presented themselves at the railway station, Bologna, a few days ago, stating that they had orders to wait there on the look-out for robbers. Being admitted to the office, they broke open the cashbox and carried away a sum of 80,000fr.

THE BRONZE STATUE cast from Russian guns taken during the late war, and intended as a memorial to the officers of Royal Artillery who fell in action, arrived at Woolwich last week, and was conveyed to the common on a wagon drawn by eight horses. It will be placed on the pedestal erected on the parade-ground, and the ceremony of inauguration will take place next week.

A MAN NAMED HINCHCLIFFE has been murdered near Sheffield, and robbed of £8 10s. Death is believed to have been the result of strangulation, and deceased's eyes were full of mud, which had evidently been thrust into them by his assailants. The perpetrators of the crime have not yet been apprehended.

THERE ARE EVERY YEAR MANUFACTURED IN VIENNA 2600 Pianos, representing a value of about 800,000 frs. The export, which had decreased during the years of war, now begins to recover.

THE NAVAL RESERVE enrolled in the ports of Whitehaven, Maryport, and Peterhead, have, like their brother sailors in other ports, spontaneously signified their offers of service to the inspecting commanders of coastguards.

THERE IS A RUMOUR in diplomatic circles in Brussels that mediation in the American dispute will be offered by King Leopold.

IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE TRENT AFFAIR, the West India Mail Company has ordered its agents to furnish no more coal to United States' vessels.

A DUTCH FLEET, consisting of eleven vessels, arrived off Laguyras on the 17th ult., in order to demand satisfaction from Venezuela for a violation of the Dutch flag.

THE UNION STEAM-SHIP COMPANY, under contract for the conveyance of her Majesty's mails to the Cape of Good Hope, &c., have received instructions from the Government to arm their steamers forthwith.

A MAZZINIAN ORGAN OF GENOA announces that Mazzini's illness has taken a very serious turn, and causes great uneasiness to his friends.

MR. PAULSEN, the celebrated chessplayer, on Monday last played ten different games simultaneously; four of which he won, lost one, and had five drawn.

AT a meeting of the subscribers to the local Herbert memorial on Tuesday it was reported that £3095 had been subscribed for the hospital, £1678 1s. 6d. for a statue, and £395 12s. placed at the disposal of the committee. The statue is to be of bronze, and its execution is proposed to be intrusted to Baron Marochetti.

PUBLIC MEETINGS AND SPEECHES.

MR. Frederick Peel last week addressed his constituents at Bury, in Lancashire, on the American question. He discussed the seizure of the Southern Commissioners in a calm spirit; expressed his doubt whether the Americans had not a right to capture them as Envoys coming from a hostile country, and wished to have that point more fully argued; but on the illegality of seizing them on the high seas, without the intervention of a prize court, he had no doubt whatever. As to the action of the Government in the event of an unfavourable reply to Lord Russell's despatch, Mr. Peel did not profess to have any special information.

MR. Charles Buxton has also addressed his constituents on the American question. The hon. gentleman argued in favour of submitting the difficulty to arbitration. While he differed from the American newspapers in the view they had taken of the affair of the Trent, he yet thought that their appeal, like our own, had been made to the rules and precedents of international law, and that therefore this was a case in which reason should be employed rather than force.

Sir Francis Baring and Sir John Elphinstone attended a dinner on behalf of a local charity at Portsmouth last week, and in the speeches they delivered on the occasion discussed the existing difficulty with America, generally holding that the conduct of Captain Wilkes was unjustifiable and that our Government were entitled to reparation for the wrong that had been done us.

On Monday evening, according to annual custom, Mr. Sheridan, M.P. for Dudley, met his constituents and friends in the Rose-hill Schoolroom, and spoke on the subjects at present occupying the public mind.

On Friday evening week a public meeting was held in the Townhall, Birmingham, to consider the position and duty of England with regard to American slavery, the existing treaties respecting the slave trade, and also the cotton question, in the Africa. Lord Callthorpe presided; and, on the motion of Lord Alfred Churchill, M.P., the following resolution was adopted:—"That this meeting, in view of the present crisis, desires to express its hope that her Majesty's Government will use every means in their power to effect a peaceful solution of existing difficulties with America."

MR. Washington Wilks last week addressed a meeting at Leeds, called to consider the question of financial reform, and, after discussing the public expenditure of the country, which he deemed excessive, and saying that great advantages might be derived from further fiscal reforms, he went on to remark upon the American question, and said that no disgrace was brought upon the British flag by the occurrence on board the Trent; but that, if we sent ships to force the blockade of the Confederate States—if we acknowledged those States—if we should place our hands in the hands of men who wield the slaveholder's scourge—if we demeaned ourselves so far as to become the friends and allies of such men, and to place the British ensign alongside of the miserable rag of the Palmetto—then, indeed, everlasting, deep, indelible disgrace would be brought upon the flag of Britain, and odium and shame would for ever stain the British name and character. Resolutions were passed approving of a system of direct, in preference to indirect, taxation.

ELECTION INTELLIGENCE.

FINSBURY.—The nomination for this borough took place on Saturday last, when the show of hands was in favour of Mr. Cox by a very large preponderance. A poll was, of course, demanded on the part of Mr. Mills, and the voting took place on Monday, and resulted in the election of Mr. Cox by a majority of 42, the numbers being:—For Cox, 4884; Mills, 4842. The result was not generally expected, and much confusion seems to have prevailed in making the returns during the day, as the figures announced were very contradictory and wide of the reality.

NOTTINGHAM.—The contest has now begun in this borough in earnest. The only candidates in the field are the Earl of Lincoln and Sir Robert Clifton. The Conservatives have not started a man, being apparently disposed to stand neutral, or are waiting the turn of the canvass, in order the better to calculate their chances. The Earl of Lincoln, having recovered from the indisposition under which he was suffering, has arrived in Nottingham, and, accompanied by Sir Morton Peto, has commenced his canvass. Sir Robert Clifton is also pursuing an active canvass, and there is every prospect of a keen contest.

SHREWSBURY.—Mr. R. A. Slaney retires at the close of the present Parliament, and Mr. Bracey, jun., late a candidate for Birkenhead, will offer himself in his place.

BEEVES AND MUTTONS.

Having already devoted some attention, on behalf of our readers, to the national beer, as represented by a Kentish Hop-garden; and to the national bread in its pristine condition as corn in the Milk-lane Market, it still remained to investigate the origin and progress of that famous "roast beef" celebrated in British song, and by British determination; while it in its turn has no small part in maintaining the British constitution, and adding strength and energy to British arms.

Of beef, simply as beef sold in our great metropolitan dead meat market, something has been already said in these pages; but at this season of the year, when men's hearts incline towards Christmas and Christmas fare—while they, in a measure, prepare themselves for the contemplation of mighty but succulent joints by a previous visit to Baker-street, it is more to the purpose to regard sirloins, ribs, legs, haunches, and saddles as forming part of the noble animals who furnish them; in short, to give our best attention to live beef and mutton by going out and looking at it in all its original beauty, fresh from its native plains.

It was with this object in view that we (a cynical friend and the present writer) found ourselves at a dimly-lighted station of the North London Railway on a market morning of the present week. Not to be reticent, it was Monday morning; and anybody who happened to be up and out at half-past four a.m. on that occasion would have found it a chilly, damp, misty, muddy, uncomfortable time of the day, especially if he had had a cynical friend as a companion, who, having been waked at least two hours too early, was determined not to be put off by such a weakness as waiting for breakfast, of which meal he himself had partaken beforehand.

Four spectral drovers, suddenly appearing from obscure benches in the gloomy cavern formed by the railway platform, greeted the arrival of the train, and vanished into the profound darkness of some remote carriage. Four sleek and comfortable master butchers, standing in a well-fed group, melted slowly into the dim mist as we took our seats in an unlighted first-class compartment. The train itself seemed to resent being dragged along at such an unnatural pace in the morning, and rumbled on slowly, as though cautiously picking its tedious way.

The spectral drovers as well as the party of butchers reappeared at the Caledonian-road station, where they had a common interest, and we finally lost them in a faintly-lighted well, which, upon close inspection, proved to be the staircase leading into the open street. The first business being with the Great Northern Railway and its "cattle station," we found ourselves plunging desperately through half-paved or wholly unpaved streets, the roadways ankle-deep in a stiff clayey mud, the footpaths flanked by dead walls or the blank backs of large brick buildings connected with the railway; but there lay before us the first intimation of beef, and we struggled on. To the "Cattle Station" are consigned the beasts that arrive from the grazing districts on the Great Northern line of communication, and on their arrival they are either met by drovers who have been appointed to await their coming, and driven at once to the pens, or, if it be market morning, to the market itself, or into the pens which the company have provided for the purpose.

The railway trucks—from which impatient lowing and occasionally a fierce bellow or two denote the character of the occupants—are run into this station from the main line, and a brick-built platform receives each drove as it is marked off by the men in readiness to receive it. Those consignments which are not immediately removed are then driven into the pens until claimed and taken to the market, to which a sort of private road leads at once from the station itself. In the case of the London and North-Western Railway the cattle-trains are run on to the North London line at a siding, and reach the pens at the Caledonian-road.

There was every promise of a good market on the occasion of our visit, and it bade fair to be what is known as a butcher's market, which means—if it means anything—Christmas beef and mutton at prices not particularly extravagant, a very obvious advantage when it is considered that the most important sales in the year were likely to be effected for the Christmas demand. The morning, breaking grey and chill, overtook us amidst a mighty squeaking of pigs in the covered platform of pens devoted to porcine accommodation. Some ewe appearances of a lively had already begun to show themselves in the streets, and the market taverns were already briskly dispensing coffee and more objectionable morning stimulants to customers who were easily distinguished as butchers, drovers and cattle-salesmen, by the varieties in their costume, and especially by the colour of their aprons: the blue as usual predominating in the butcher and the white and buff in the live dealer. The entire neighbourhood of the market, however, seems to be suffering from a continual state of unrest, and the shops and way-ars all exhibit indications of resentment at having to awake at preternaturally early hours. It must be for this reason that the roads and pathways are left unfinished, while no board of works has yet been able to overcome the confusion occasioned by want of sleep, and pavements are utterly ignored as an unnecessary interference with the generally unfinished state of the entire district.

These reflections, the result of a walk through a couple of miles of ploughed road, were superseded, however, by the glorious sight which burst upon us—the first revelation of British beef and mutton at the great cattle market. Eight thousand and forty beasts, twenty-six thousand three hundred sheep, two hundred and two calves, and four hundred and sixty pigs, occupied that noble arena; attended by men of grave aspect, who looked to the comfort of the animals as representing property. There was ample space for all this mighty lowing herd, these tender bleating flocks; and, save a few tussles with an obstinate sheep or two, and the occasional necessity for turning a restive ox or bull, by an application of the goad or a gentle twist of the tail, nothing could exceed the general good understanding.

I recollected Smithfield, and rejoiced that its atrocities had passed away, that its cruelties were likely to become mere traditions, remembered only with loathing.

Away to the right of the market offices stand the clean red Devons, with their staglike legs and that bright greenish light in their quick eyes; compact, symmetrical, but fleshy, they are surely the most graceful of all the bovine race, and contrast strangely with the mighty bulk of the great Norfolk beast and the proportions of the regular "shorthorn" breed.

Towards the centre of the market are the sheep pens, where there are more varieties than I have time to count, although, with an artificial imitation of sagacity, I bury my fists in the thick wool of several and handle them with an assumption of knowledge.

There, where a little knot of men are standing looking curiously into one of the pens, is a dreadful specimen of mutton in the shape of a Gloucestershire ram of surprising breadth. The efforts of this animal, who reclines on a wisp of clean straw, are tremendous; but it takes him a quarter of an hour to get up, and, from what I heard, nearly half an hour to lie down again. There are some choice sheep near here, and amongst the finest, a pen of ten Southdowns (Hampshire), bred by Mr. Paul, and the winners of the prize in the Isle of Wight. They were splendid creatures, and possessed in a wonderful degree that remarkable grace of outline which the close mass of wool enables the "Down" to preserve. I recollect taking hold of one of the Southdowns in another pen, and although it was a symmetrical animal, my hand was buried to the wrist in a wet mass of wool, which made the sheep feel like a mighty sponge easily requiring to be squeezed dry. A pen of Cotswolds (North Leicestershire) attracted a considerable share of attention as fine animals, but the enormous number made much distinction impossible, and we passed through long alleys of all sorts of excellent live mutton, from the little black-faced Highlander to the heavy animal, one of three whose acquaintance we afterwards made outside, where it occupied the whole of a light cart. A hasty glance at the meek-looking, white-faced Hereford cattle, and

the dappled beauties from Durham, where, tied by herself to a separate rail, stands that skittish Durham cow with the racehorse legs and the wicked looking snout and eye. Once let her succeed in throwing that halter off her arching neck and she would be away like a deer, or perhaps would stop to resent with all her fierceness the touch of critical hands upon her haunches. Why am I led to make an inquiry of a stolid attendant with a stony eye and a flat, pale face, who with a grinning companion is throwing fresh straw under the feet of those black and white cattle? They look dirty and a little out of sorts, do those same middle-sized beasts, but meary notwithstanding, and with undeniably good points about them, and I require information as to their breed, an inquiry for which elicits nothing but a broad and somewhat threatening stare, such as we ourselves might bestow upon a little boy whom we suspected of having some latent design of "chaffing" us.

"What breed are these?" I asked for the third time, adding that I was altogether unacquainted with the subject. "They're what we call Dutch beasts," was the reply. After my informant had discovered that I was simply ignorant, and without deigning to notice the airy manner in which I endeavoured to conceal my confusion, he simply turned his back upon me and devoted himself to another wisp of straw.

I might have discovered it for myself; there they were, sure enough, the very fellows who look at you out of "Cupp" and half a score of the old Dutch painters. Slow, patient, rather greasy-looking animals, but, as I have said before, with capital points about them. These and the little Irish stock-basters were amongst the last of those I had come to see—the latter presenting a rather tumbled appearance from their sea voyage, and, indeed, being only designed as the mere sketches for beef, sent here to be filled up. Stay a moment, though; we can look at those two enormous black beasts as we go out. There, now you know what a Highland steer should be, all black as night, and with a carcass the broad base of which gives little idea of mere fitness, but still suggests a world of eating.

But there is no time to linger, for we must away, as our work is not yet done. Beeves and muttons come not alone by railway and from distant English pastures. We have but now left the batch of foreign visitors known as "Dutch beasts," the Irish elder cousins to the British calf. These come by the Lion from Harlingen, the Magnet from Medemblik, the Gipsy from Amsterdam, all vessels lading their living cargoes at a little wharf lying outside the St. Katharine Docks, not far from the Tower of London, and hither come also the Cork steamer, and the Spanish vessel, bringing in her an occasional drove of those half-wild, longhorned Corunnas. Back, then, by the North London Railway, where wearied drovers sit almost asleep on the wooden benches and the ordinary passengers of the business trains are strangely mingled with heavy-booted, bespattered men, who are now going home to breakfast, if not to bed. Skirting the Tower, and keeping round by the dock wall and over the drawbridge of the basin, we came to a region of mast and block makers, alternating with stacks and warehouses, and here, in a quiet road way, lies the "Dublin Steamwharf." It is but a small place, certainly, but the arrangements for landing the cattle are simple enough. A broad wooden pier lying out into the river affords ample space for the vessel to come alongside; and a strong wide gangway, fitted with stout side rails, makes a safe road from the ship to the shore. Such of the cattle as are suffering from the voyage, or are otherwise unable to walk up the slight incline, are hoisted out by means of a crane and slings; for it not unfrequently happens that the animals suffer severely from a stress of weather, and in the last cargo from Cork there were no fewer than thirty which had died from this cause.

We can scarcely conclude the account of our visit to the great market anniversary of British beef and mutton better than by a bit of statistical information, which will show that we are not altogether independent of foreign sources of supply for a part of our consumption.

The Lion (the landing of the cattle from which is represented in our Engraving) brought 207 beasts and 8295 sheep; the Magnet, 118 beasts and 1011 sheep; the Gipsy, 29 beasts and 685 sheep; while the Cork steamer brought from Ireland 116 live and 30 dead beasts. With which collection of facts we will change our boots, and over a tender steak, glory in the bread, beef, and beer of the true-born Briton.

THE CHRISTMAS CATTLE MARKET.—Next in succession and importance to the exhibition of stock at the Prince Cattle Show is the display at the Christmas Cattle Market. There was a rosy muster of the farming interest at Monday morning's exhibition, despite the unfavourable aspect of the weather. In reference to the production of beef the show of beasts was calculated rather to moderate than to increase those anticipations which a visit to Baker-street must have excited. In point of numbers it was the largest on record; but it was the general opinion that there was not the weight of meat which has been shown on previous occasions; nor was the risk near so even as on some of the great days in preceding years. Altogether, however, the show was by no means depressing, and, if not the best that has been seen, it must be pronounced as by no means unsatisfactory one. The Devons were perhaps the most conspicuous for the force in which they mustered, and they comprised many very beautiful animals; but we missed that regularity in the selection, as a whole, which has been so striking on prior occasions. The Herefords maintained their position well as regards condition and form; a very large proportion of them was of a most saleable character, and described as all that a butcher could wish. The shorthorns and cross bred oxen made an extensive show, and held their own well by their massive structure of good solid meat. Of Scots, either horned or polled, the gathering was not numerous, but there were some as fine specimens among them as were ever seen, and they were pronounced to be as near perfect as possible to the eye or to the touch. The entire collection numbered 8040 head, of which 700 were from Scotland, 5300 from Cambridgeshire, Leicestershire, and Northamptonshire, 2735 from other parts of England, and the remaining 1305 from Ireland and abroad. The weather was against trade, and the disposal of the stock was rather heavy work, whilst the prices realised were generally about 21. per stone under those offered on the great day last year, the general top quotations of prime Scots, Herefords, &c., being 5s. 4d. per stone. The show of sheep, besides being the largest as to numbers, was decidedly better than that of 1860, and fully as good as any on record. The Downs were very numerous, and included some extraordinarily fine pens, whilst Leicesters and other longwools maintained an honourable rivalry. The mutton trade, although not so good as might have been the case with more reasonable temperature, was tolerably animated; but, as with beef, the prices realised fell about 21. per stone below the currency of Christmas, 1860, the present average top price being 5s. 6d. per stone, but a picked pen here and there brought more. The total number offered was 26,300. Veal and pork, as usual on the grand day, attracted but little attention.

DISCOVERY OF ALFRED, SON OF VOLTAIRE.—Some recently-discovered manuscripts, which are affirmed to be from the hand of Voltaire, contain, it is stated, a comedy never performed in public, and a second part of the famous satirical romance, "Candide." The newly-discovered works are to be immediately published, and we should think there can be little difficulty in finding as to their genuineness. If anybody ever lived who could successfully imitate the sprightly style of Voltaire, he has certainly succeeded in keeping his existence so far a mystery. Literary readers will also be interested in an announcement that some volumes of essays are about to be published which were written by the late King of Portugal. They are described as treating chiefly of political subjects, and are said to breathe a liberal and enlightened spirit.

BORGES AND THE ITALIAN BRIGANDAGE.—Borges, the reactionary leader who came from Spain to head the brigandage of Southern Italy, appears really to have met his end. The *Pungolo* of Naples states that before he died he declared that he had been deceived by the Legitimist Committee in Paris, and that no elements whatever existed in Southern Italy out of which to form a revolution against the Italian Government. He declared that the only force which could be gathered together was that of robbers and assassins, hired by gold; and seemed to intimate that Francis II. had been deceived as well as himself. He met his fate, it is stated, with courage and composure. His correspondence and a journal of his operations have been seized. We give all this statement without, so far, venturing to guarantee its truth. The *Patrie* mentions papers maintained up to a day or two ago that Borges had not really been taken at all; and although their testimony counts for little in such a case, yet there is still a possibility that the identity of the genuine ringleader may not have been decisively ascertained.

DEATH OF THE PRINCE CONSORT.

We little imagined, when we mentioned in our last Number that his Royal Highness the Prince Consort had been prevented by indisposition from attending the opening of the Smithfield Club Cattle Show, that we should this week have to record the melancholy fact that the husband of her Majesty is no more. But so it is. On Saturday evening last, at ten minutes to eleven, his Royal Highness breathed his last at Windsor Castle, and the mournful fact was made known to the inhabitants of the metropolis about midnight by the booming of the great bell of St. Paul's, and on Sunday morning by the tolling of the other church bells throughout London. The event was quite unexpected. A bulletin had been issued on Wednesday, indeed; but it only intimated that the Prince was suffering from gastric fever, and that his illness might be of protracted duration, but was not attended by any serious symptoms. On Friday, however, the disease took an alarming turn, and a bulletin which on Saturday morning announced the fact spread dismay and astonishment throughout the country. Then, all at once, the fearful affliction, which threatened her Majesty was seen, and on every side information as to the state of his Royal Highness's health was sought for with the most intense eagerness. In the course of Saturday forenoon it was announced that a change, slightly for the better, had taken place in the illustrious patient's condition, which was welcomed as almost a relief from the state of feverish anxiety under which all had waited for news. Untappily, this slight improvement, which raised such ardent hopes wherever it was known, proved to be but a precursor of the fatal issue. During Saturday morning—at least in the early part—his Royal Highness undoubtedly seemed better; and, notwithstanding that his condition was in the highest degree precarious, the change, though sudden, was marked, and almost justified the strong hopes that were then entertained that he would recover. This change was but for a short time, and, in fact, but one of those expiring efforts of nature which give delusive hopes to the mourners round so many deathbeds. Soon afterwards his Royal Highness again relapsed, and before the evening it became evident that it was only a question of an hour more or less. The Prince sank with alarming rapidity. At four the physicians issued a bulletin stating that their patient was then in "a most critical condition," which was indeed a sad truth, for at that time almost every hope of recovery had passed away. Her Majesty, and the Prince of Wales (who had travelled through the previous night from Cambridge), the Princesses Alice and Helena, and the Prince and Princess of Leiningen, were with their illustrious relative during all this mournful and most trying period. The approach of death from exhaustion was so rapid that all stimulants failed to check the progressive increase of weakness, and the fatal termination was so clearly foreseen that even before nine o'clock on Saturday evening a telegram was forwarded from Windsor to the City stating that the Prince Consort was then dying fast. Quietly and without suffering he continued slowly to sink, so slowly that the wrists were pulseless long before the last moment had arrived when, at a few minutes before eleven, he ceased to breathe, all was over. An hour after and the solemn tones of the great bell of St. Paul's—a bell of evil omen—told all citizens how irreparable had been the loss of their beloved Queen, how great the loss to the country.

During Sunday the intelligence was received everywhere with a feeling so painful that it would really be difficult to exaggerate the amazement and grief manifested. The first fear—a wide, deep, and general fear—was, that the great and keen affliction with which it has pleased Heaven in its wisdom to visit the Royal family might prove too much for the strength of her Majesty, and that she herself might sink under her irreparable bereavement. A bulletin, however, posted at Buckingham Palace, stating that the Queen, though overwhelmed with grief, bore her loss with calmness, and had not then suffered in health, was soon known everywhere—such was the eagerness with which news of the Queen at such a heavy time was sought for.

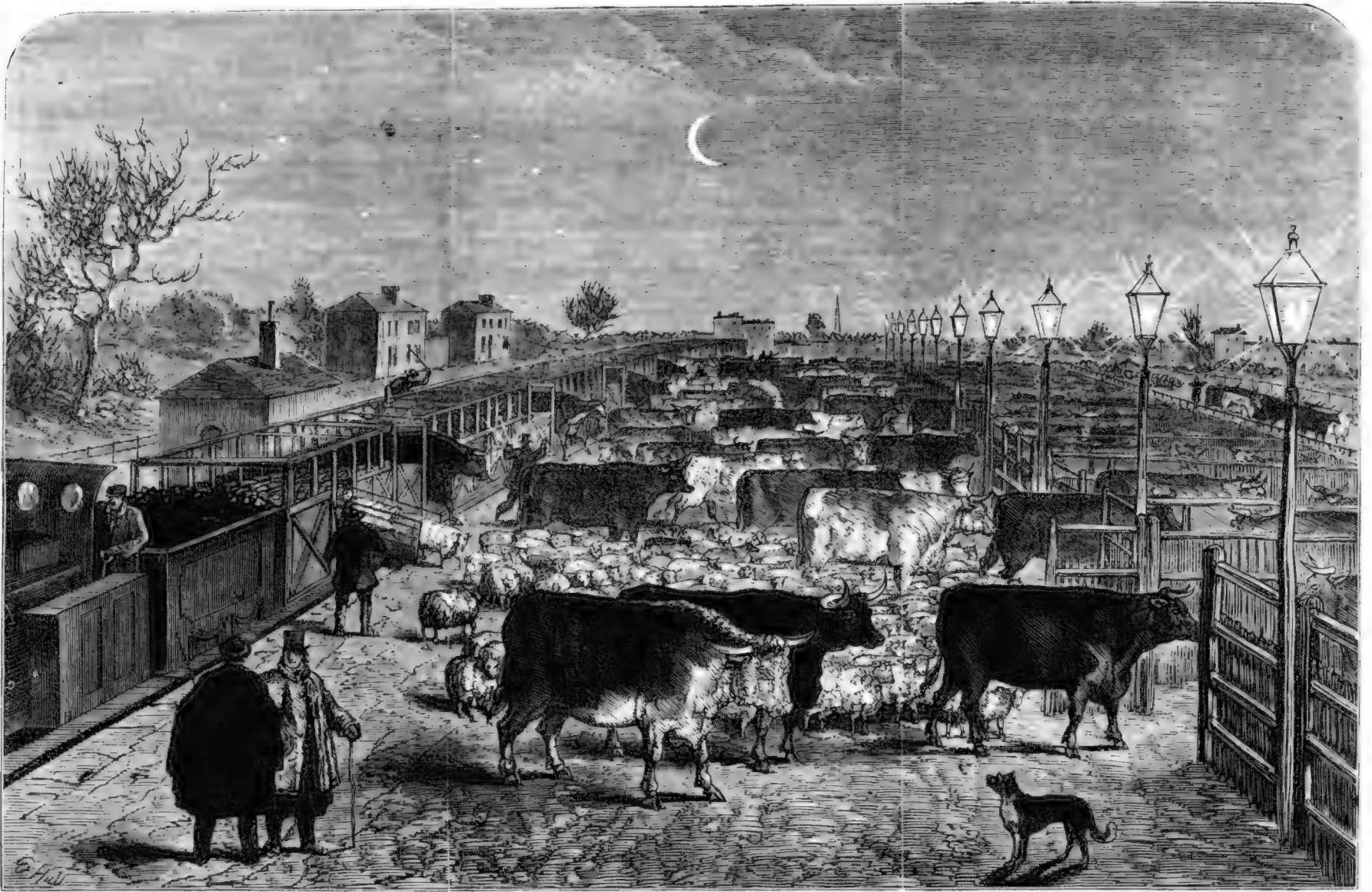
The medical gentlemen in attendance on his Royal Highness were Dr. James Clark, Sir Henry Holland, Dr. Thomas Watson, and Dr. William Jenner. It is needless to add that every effort which the professional skill and experience of these eminent physicians could suggest was made on behalf of their Royal patient; but, unhappily, in vain.

In all the metropolitan churches, and in those of many provincial towns where the melancholy tidings had been received, references were made in the services to the lamented loss the Queen and the country had sustained, and everywhere the most profound grief and sympathy with her Majesty and the Royal family were manifested.

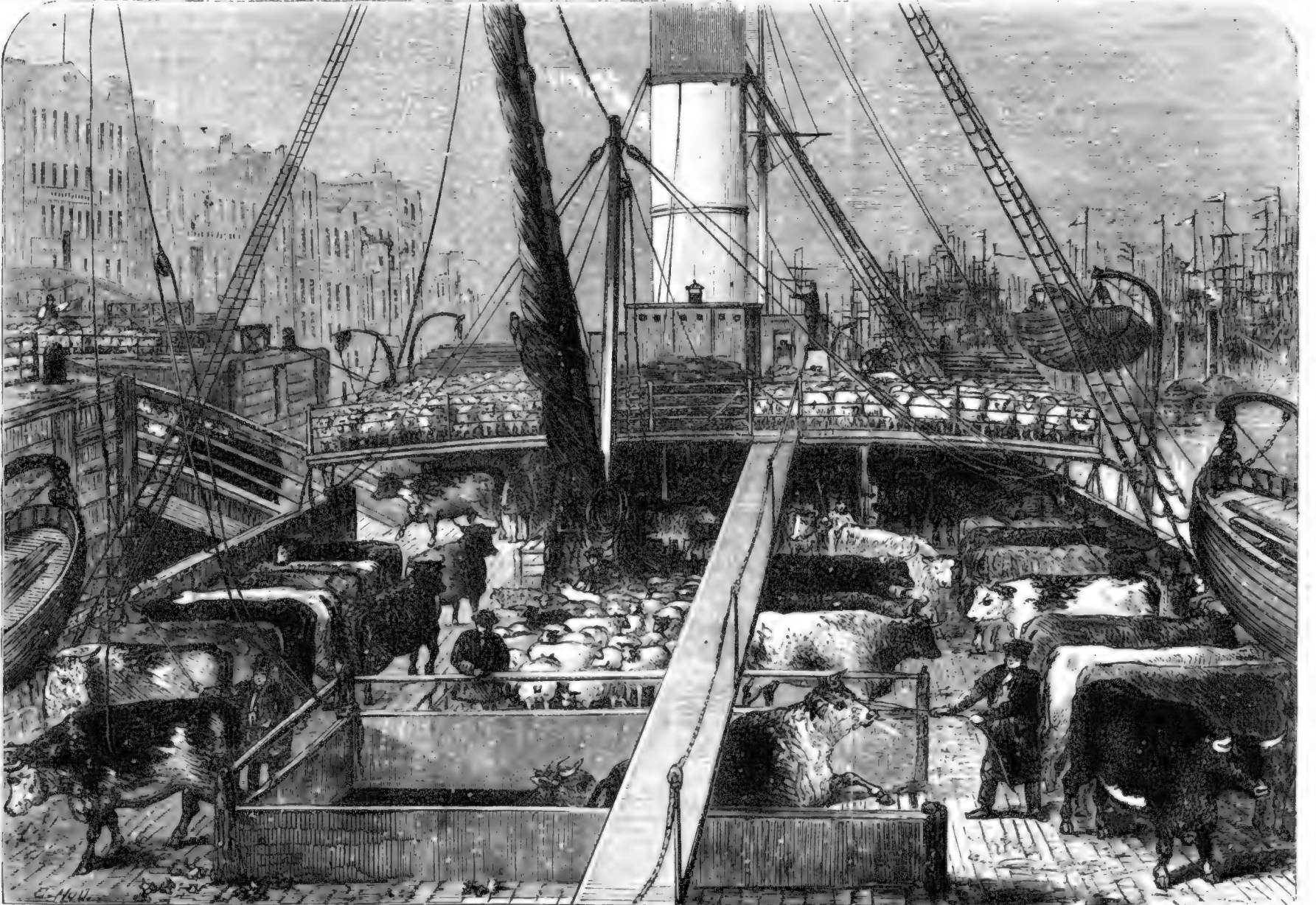
His Royal Highness Albert Francis Augustus Charles Emmanuel, Prince Consort of England, Prince of Sax-Coburg-Gotha, Duke of Saxony, a Field Marshal in the Army, K.G., K.P., K.T., G.C.B., K.P., G.C.M.G., Knight of the Golden Fleece, Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, D.C.L., LL.D., Colonel of the Grenadier Guards, Colonel-in-Chief of the Rifle Brigade, and Captain-General of the Royal Artillery, was the second son of his Royal Highness Ernest Antony Charles Lewis, Duke of Sax-Coburg-Saalfeld, by his first marriage with Dorothy Louisa Paulina Charlotte Frederica Augusta, daughter of his Royal Highness Augustus, Duke of Sax-Gotha-Altenberg. On the death of the eccentric Duke Frederick, in 1806, the Duke of Sax-Coburg inherited the principality of Gotha, the Salic law preventing his wife from succeeding to it; but he did not formally become possessed of the Duchy until Nov. 12, 1826, after which time he became Duke of Sax-Coburg-Gotha. The Duke's ancestors had been first Margraves of Meissen, and then Electors of the Empire; and he was proud to be called the lineal descendant of that famous Elector who was the first to sign the protest at Spire against the decision of the Diet of Augsburg, the Protest being that which mainly served to give the title of "Protestants" to all opponents of the Church of Rome.

Prince Albert was born at Rosenau on the 26th of August, 1819. He was educated under his father's supervision at the castle, his masters being selected from the College of Coburg. His mother died when he was scarcely eleven years old, and he was then sent to England for a while to the residence of his aunt, the Duchess of Kent, who was residing in strict seclusion at Kensington Palace, educating her daughter, the Princess Victoria. The young Prince became the fellow-student of the Princess, his future wife. He remained about fifteen months in England, Kensington and Claremont being alternately his home. After his father's second marriage with a Princess of Wurtemberg, Prince Albert returned to Coburg. On the 3rd of May, 1837, his elder brother, the present Duke Ernest, and he entered the University of Bonn as Studiosus Juris, where they remained during three terms, or about eighteen months.

In 1839 the young Prince and his father paid a visit to England on the occasion of the coronation of the Princess Victoria as Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. The Duke and the Prince, it was remarked, remained at Windsor and in London longer than the guests of higher rank. On leaving England the Prince went on a tour through Bavaria and Italy, and on his return home found on the wall of his room, to his astonishment and delight, a picture of Queen Victoria (painted by Chalon and engraved by Cousin) sent specially as a present to him from her Majesty. The probability of a marriage between her Majesty and Prince Albert was shortly afterwards announced; and, in 1840, his Royal Highness and his brother, along with the King of the Belgians, paid another visit to England. One week after the Prince had left our shores—namely, on the 23rd of December, 1840, her Majesty summoned her Privy Counsellors, eighty-five of whom were present, and announced her intention to unite herself in marriage



CATTLE FOR THE CHRISTMAS MARKET—THE CATTLE STATION OF THE GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY.



THE LION STEAM-BOAT LANDING CATTLE AT THE DUBLIN WHARF, EAST SMITHFIELD.

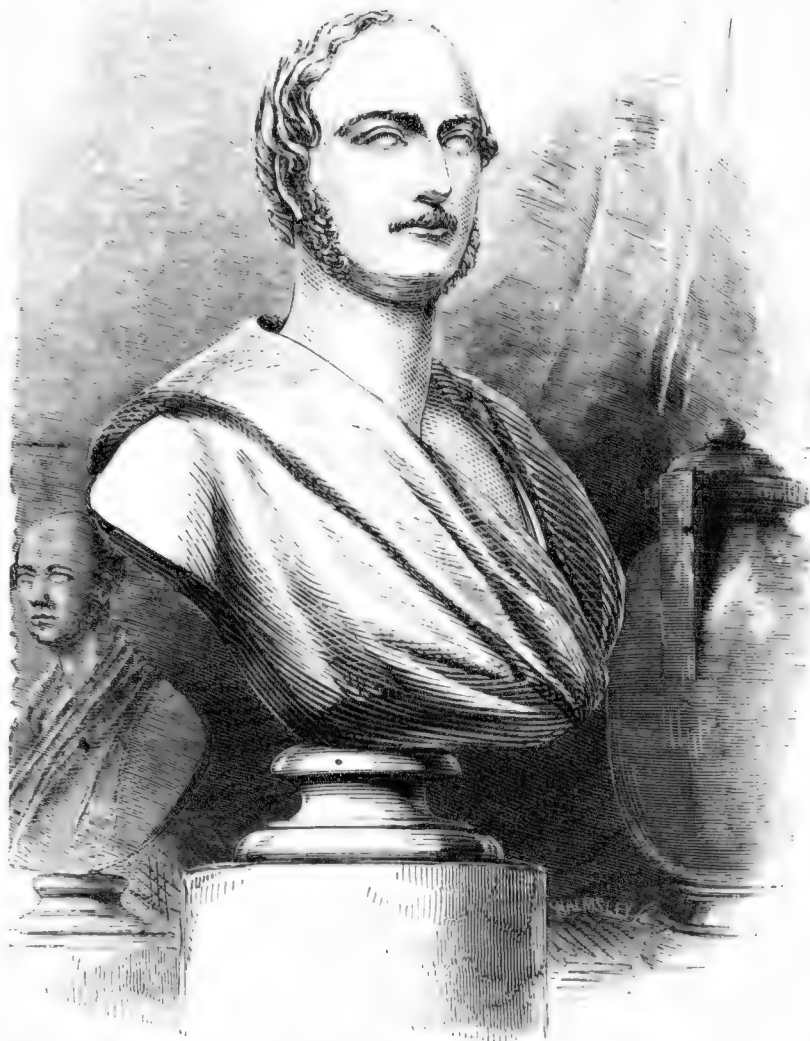
with Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. The Queen emphatically declared her belief that the alliance would, "by the blessing of God, secure her domestic happiness and serve the best interests of her country." The marriage accordingly took place on the 10th of February, 1840, and it may be fairly said that a more auspicious and happy union was never celebrated. The Act of Parliament under which the Prince was naturalised was the 3rd Vic., cap 1 and 2. The income granted by Act of Parliament was £30,000. He received his title of Royal Highness by patent, dated Feb. 6, 1840, and was empowered to quarter the Royal arms on the 7th of February in the same year. On the following day he received his commission as Field Marshal, and he was made Colonel of the 11th, or Prince Albert's Own, Hussars, on the 30th of April, 1840. In April, 1842, he received his commission as Colonel of the Scots Fusilier Guards. In August, 1850, he became Colonel-in-Chief of the 60th Rifles, and on the 28th of September, 1852, he was appointed Colonel-in-Chief of the Rifle Brigade and Colonel of the Grenadier Guards, on the death of the Duke of Wellington. His Royal Highness was granted letters of precedence next after the Queen on the 5th of March, 1840, and was nominated a member of the Privy Council on the 11th of September, 1840. He was appointed Grand Ranger of Windsor Park in 1841, and received the Order of the Golden Fleece in April of that year. In April, 1842, he received the appointment of Lord Warden of the Stannaries and Chief Steward of the Duchy of Cornwall. He became Governor and Constable of Windsor Castle in May, 1843, and first and principal Knight Grand Cross and Acting Great Master of the Order of the Bath in June, 1843. He was also made High Steward of Plymouth in June, 1843, and Captain-General and Colonel of the Artillery Company in September of that year. His election as Chancellor of the University of Cambridge took place on the 27th of February, 1847. He was High Steward of New Windsor in July, 1850, and President of the Zoological Society in July, 1851. On the 19th of October, 1852, he was nominated Master of the Trinity House. In February, 1856, he was made Knight of the Order of the Seraphim by the King of Sweden. His creation as Prince Consort was effected by letters patent, dated the 2nd of July, 1857; and he was elected President of the Horticultural Society in February, 1858.

During a residence among us of nearly twenty-two years' duration his Royal Highness had, in spite of many difficulties and annoyances, earned the good wishes of Englishmen by his abstinence from the intrigues of political factions, his patronage of art, science, and literature, his able management of the Duchy of Cornwall, and his earnest advocacy of all charitable and philanthropic movements; that his memory will long be cherished and his loss be most severely felt throughout the whole extent of the country of his adoption.

The Prince Consort expired in the apartment known as the King's Room, in which King George IV. and William IV. died.

His late Royal Highness will be buried on Monday, at twelve o'clock, in the royal vault in the Chapel Royal, Windsor Castle. The funeral, in accordance with the wishes of the august deceased, and of the Queen and Royal family, will be strictly a private one.

The public grief manifested at the death of the Prince Consort has been universal. The reports received from all parts of the country show that his removal from amongst us is regarded as a national loss. The Lord Chamberlain has issued an order for the Court to go immediately into mourning. Affecting allusions have been made to the sorrowful event by the Judges who presided in the law



BUST OF HIS LATE ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE CONSORT RECENTLY EXECUTED
BY MR. NOBLE.

sympathy amongst all classes of the Prussian people, and plunged the Royal family into the deepest grief. The King and Queen hastened to sympathise with the Princess Royal on her sad bereavement. The Crown Prince of Prussia together with the King of the Belgians, are shortly expected in England on a visit of condolence to her Majesty. The Crown Princess of Prussia, it is said, will be precluded by the state of her health from visiting her august mother on this sad occasion.

The bulletins issued state that her Majesty continues to bear her heavy trial with calmness and fortitude, though, of course, feeling her bereavement intensely.

Her Majesty was advised by the physicians to leave the castle as early as possible after the death of the Prince Consort, and Monday was first fixed upon for her departure to Osborne; it was subsequently postponed till Tuesday. Still the Queen could not make up her mind to quit the castle, and Wednesday was the day named; but it is uncertain whether her Majesty will not, after the funeral, join the Prince of Wales at Frogmore, where his Royal Highness has for the present taken up his residence.

OLD VENETIAN GLASS.

VENICE took up the manufacture of glass, the rudiments of which were taught by Greek workmen coming from Byzantium (Constantinople), who in their turn had learnt it from the ancient

Roman, Greek, and Phœnician workmen. Even before the thirteenth century began the Venetians were in full activity supplying the markets of the Mediterranean, principally with ornamental articles, such as beads and imitation jewels. The island of Murano was given up to the glassworkers, and remains, indeed, to this day the place where the Venetian glass is still to be seen being manufactured, though not in the same state of finish and taste for ornament, nor to the same extent, as was maintained up to the eighteenth century, when Bohemian workmen became rivals in the art and competitors in commerce. Murano gradually lost its trade, and the glassworkers those exclusive privileges which had been granted them by the old Republic of Venice. At present it is merely occupied in producing very clumsy imitations of the beautiful old *lattice* (lace-glass) and *mille-fiore* (flowered glass), with occasionally some new application of spun-glass, such as the pretty basketwork articles which have recently been introduced into our shops. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the great masters in the glassworks of Venice were so esteemed that they were the rivals of the old nobility, and filled the highest positions in the State. The art was not confined to making vessels for domestic use, such as those shown in our Illustration, but the largest chandeliers were made, and these were ornamented with the most elaborate devices in flowers of every colour and form, with fantastic branches and pendants in imitation of crystals and jewels. Occasionally these magnificent chandeliers are seen in our salerooms, and many are still used in the old halls of the nobility; there are also several in the South Kensington Museum, some of which belonged to the Soulagues Collection, as the specimens of wine-glasses did which we have selected. The peculiarity of the Venetian glass is its remarkable lightness, the elegance of its forms, and the purity of the coloured portions, especially where flowers are imitated in opaque glass. A good example is the wine-glass with the stem formed in spikes and flowers, with scrolls. The bowl of these glasses was made always as delicate as possible, and there was a superstitious notion that if poison, which in those days of Venice was not uncommon, were in the wine the glass would detect it by instantly bursting. These glasses were much larger than ours, being generally from eight inches to a foot or more in height. The Venetians were fond of grotesques, and frequently made vessels in the shape of animals, sometimes moulded, but more commonly blown into the form. The goblet with a stag is one of these, and it also shows a contrivance like a syphon, of which the body and neck of the stag are the short limb, communicating with the central tube by the legs, through which the wine would flow by the mouth of the stag into a small glass when the goblet was slightly tilted, the object, perhaps, being to obtain the wine without disturbing

any dregs there might be in the liquor. Large bowls or tazze were also made in various ornamental shapes, and on these frequently very beautiful patterns were painted in enamel colours, some of the best being a very good imitation of the eye of the peacock's feather, arranged in circles round the vessel, and giving a very charming effect. But a most pleasing kind of glasswork is that by which the appearance of white or coloured network, like lace, is given, inclosed in the transparent glass which forms the vessel, and leaving a small airbubble



ANCIENT VENETIAN WINEGLASS.



ANCIENT VENETIAN WINEGLASSES.



ANCIENT VENETIAN WINEGLASS.

Courts, and in the Court of Common Council a resolution of condolence with her Majesty in her distressing bereavement was unanimously adopted. Several learned and other societies have postponed their ordinary meetings on account of the death of his Royal Highness, or have limited the business transacted to the expression of the regret of the members, and their condolence with the Royal family in their bereavement. On Monday the theatres were closed by order of the Lord Chamberlain; and the proprietors of the several music-halls in the metropolis met and resolved to close their establishments on that evening.

The marks of regret and sympathy which the death of the Prince Consort has elicited from the Emperor and Empress, in which the whole French nation participate, are well calculated to win the goodwill of the British people. The *Moniteur* announces that the Court will go into mourning for twenty-one days, and the flag which waves over the Tuileries is hoisted half-mast high. Both the Emperor and Empress have also sent autograph letters of condolence to our bereaved Sovereign.

The news of the death of the Prince awakened the deepest

in the meshes. Another effect is given by inclosing slices of coloured strips, formed of several different colours melted together. All these kinds of glass manufacture have been recently very successfully revived, principally through the researches of Mr. Apsley Pellatt, the well-known manufacturer; but the characteristic delicacy of the old Venetian glass has never yet been equalled.

The first glass-factory in England appears to have been established in 1567, at the Savoy House in the Strand, and in 1635 a patent was granted to Sir Robert Mansell for glassmaking, and empowering him to import Venetian glass. In 1670, also, the second Duke of Buckingham brought over some Venetian glassworkers to settle in London; but the great advances in glasswork have been made by our own manufacturers during the last thirty years, though principally in the direction of large plate and every kind of moulded and cut glass in pure crystal. The coloured glass manufacture is still in the hands of the French and Germans for all the superior kinds.

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HARM

CHRISTMAS SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

ILLUSTRATED TIMES

LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1861.

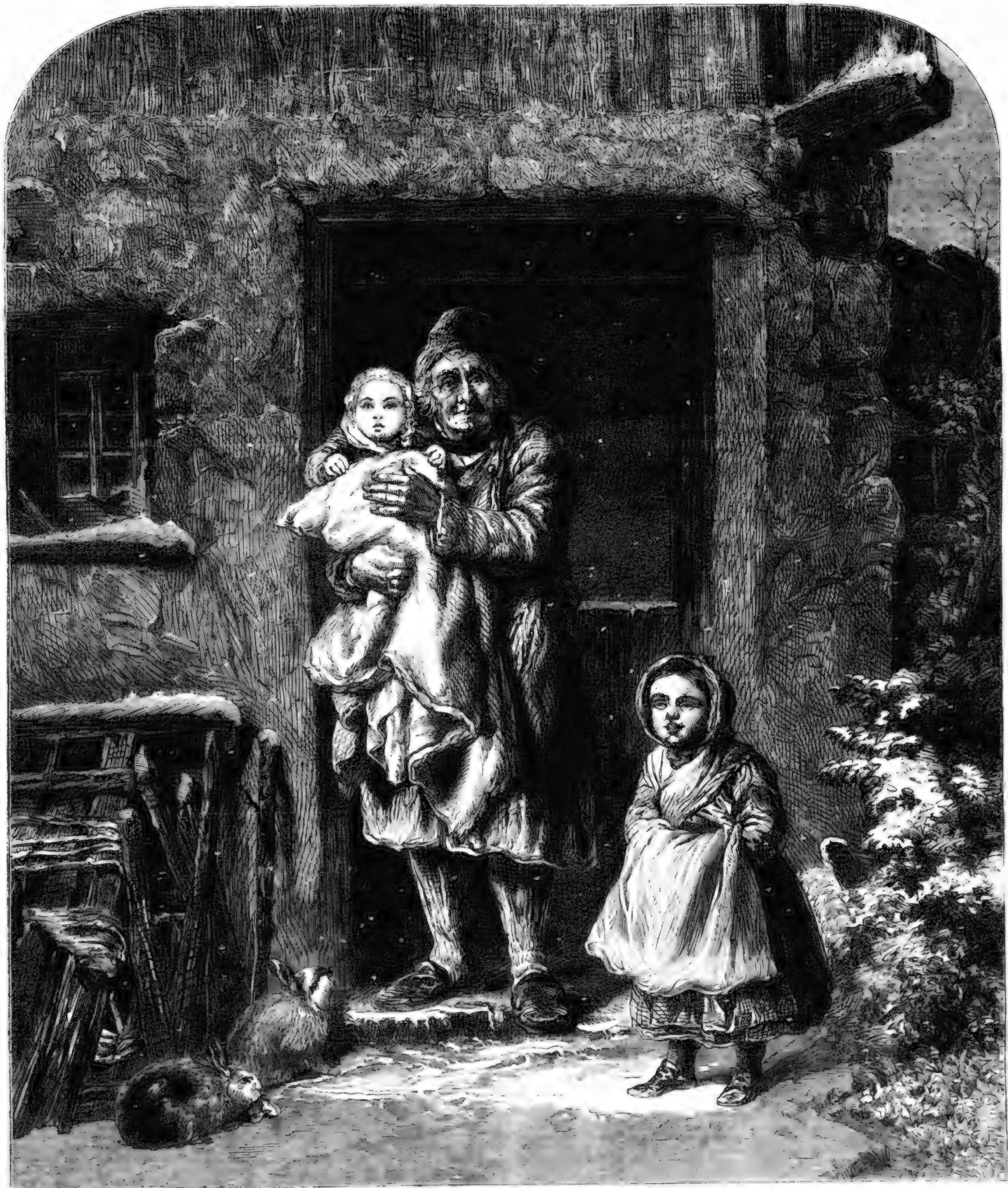
THE FIRST FALL OF SNOW.

It is wonderful how great an influence the Christmas-tide has in bringing the extremes of life together. Save amongst the heartless, who acknowledge no claim, and the indifferent, who desire no community, there is a world of genial sympathy in the season at which old and young, rich and poor, alike celebrate the first hearing of the "glad tidings of comfort and joy." Old and young are especially brought together on those great occasions when families gather their remaining members round one hearth and the grey hairs become a

crown of glory, a true silver nimbus, under the light of the ruddy fire and the Christmas candles decorating the dark green branches of of holly.

'Tis a glorious thing to see the grandsire in an old age, not dead but healthy at heart by reason of the spirit of youth within him, helping at the Christmas games, and, with the little ones round his knees, recalling half-forgotten stories and awakening memories of a time when he too looked forward to the coming of a revered playmate. What an unassailable belief the little people have in him—what a

trustful love he has for them! Oh! Christmas is a great time for grandfathers, and they have serious charges to perform if they read their work aright. They *must* know everything. Have they not fought in that great arena spoken of vaguely as "the world," through the chink in whose door the little people standing on the threshold have not yet dared to peep; and the old man comes out again and stay with them. It's all very well to talk about what you'll do when you're a man, and go into life, why grandfather has *been* there. Grandfather doesn't, we hope,



THE FIRST FALL OF SNOW.

represent that it is all complete and absolute "vanity and vexation of spirit;" his age has kept too green for such an opinion as that, but he shakes his head with a grave smile at the prattle of the little aspirants. He has made the voyage, you see; has fought a fight of one sort or other; perhaps has returned with colours flying and the sails all set; or it may be creep into harbour a shattered hull and spars all shot away; it comes to this anyhow—that he sits down in the old chair, by the chimney corner, looks up to Heaven, we hope, to give thanks, and takes the little ones upon his knees; praying that they may be more valiant and yet more humble than he has been.

Some such thoughts as these are perhaps but a rambling exposition of what was suggested by the title of this picture, and yet with what an evident confidence do the two little creatures commit themselves to the old friend nurse father, who takes them to the door to see the spotless feathers of winter's herald. How many winters have laid their frosted hands upon his head? How many pure glistening distances of youth and manhood has he seen cut up into dirty ruts and blackened heaps by the traffic of the world?

It is but a grave smile which meets the eye of the little maiden who runs to catch the wavering flakes in her gathered apron. The infant in his arms who sees the strange phenomenon, perhaps, for the first time, regards the world even as he does. In one there is no eager desire, because there is yet no knowledge beyond the present; in the other, desire has been relinquished through a knowledge of the past.

MY AUNT'S CHRISTMAS.

BY WILLIAMS BUCHANAN.

"THANK goodness, I was never nervous!" (said my Aunt Martha, a tall, vigorous maiden lady of forty, country bred, and physically very courageous. It was Christmas Eve, and we—the sisters and brothers, and nephews and nieces of the speaker—were assembled in her cosy little parlour at Hampstead. Our design was to see in Christmas, and our method of beguiling the time was storytelling.)

"Thank goodness, I was never nervous. I was a country girl, you see; I ate and drank heartily. I took plenty of exercise, I breathed pure air, and perhaps I believed that the privilege of being frightened at a mouse or a spider appertained solely to your fine ladies of quality. Nervous, no!—though I was sadly tried, mind you."

Father's farm was down in the country—down at a lonely, outlandish sort of place, called Caverford. Caverford, I think, was the name of the parish; and it was also the name of the village, which was some two miles from the farm. The village was a very small one, inhabited chiefly by agricultural people in the employ of the farmers.

Father, you know, was well to do; and if he hadn't speculated so much he might have been wealthy. As matters stood he was considered a little better off than he really was, and his neighbours, the farmers, held him and his in high estimation. They courted his company, too, for he was half-fellow-well-met with them all; and a merrier, more goodnatured man never proved a friend indeed to a friend in need. He would never put his name on paper to oblige an acquaintance, but he had always a guinea to spare for a poor friend, and never turned a deaf ear to an appeal for help. What else? Not much, perhaps, for father was rough, homespun, and poorly educated; but he knew how to work for health and home, and he was hospitable, and he kept up Christmas Day with the best of them.

When I was nineteen years of age, and when my sisters and brothers were quite children, poor mother died, and I had to take her place at father's board. I had to see that father was comfortable, and to take charge of the little ones. Being strong and healthy, I found these duties quite bearable, and even pleasant; and, naturally enough, I hesitated before thinking of love or marriage. Now, I had no scarcity of admirers. Some admired me personally; for I was a good-looking girl, then, and wore real natural roses on my cheeks. Some admired the dowry which they expected would go with me. Others—widowers, these—admired my strong limbs and vigorous healthy body, thinking me fit to look after their young children. But I heeded none of them. I laughed, joked, romped with them, but cared for none of them seriously. Say, I forget. There was one young fellow for whom I had rather a liking, and who loved me warmly.

His name was Darrell, Tom Darrell, and he lived with his uncle at the latter's farm, three miles distant.

Nobody could have disliked Tom. He was tall and well built; had fine, flashing brown eyes, and wore great black whiskers, which made a man of him. Tom Dare-the-Devil, some people called him; for he was great in all sports where he ran any risk of breaking his head or his neck. Perhaps I liked him because he was overstocked with courage, and perhaps for the same reason I was rather afraid to encourage him; for men like Tom, however goodnatured they may be, don't always make the best or most considerate of husbands; and he was the very pink of goodnature—all dash and rattle and laughter; and he could say sly things to one with his twinkling eye when the tongue kept still for discretion's sake. Well, all the girls around ran after Tom, and Tom ran after me.

At first I didn't encourage him at all; and I romped, laughed, and made free with him, just to show that he was no more to me than the rest of the men, and that I cared little about him. At last, however, when I was twenty, and when Tom was twenty-five, I changed my mind, and thought I would give him a little encouragement. Why?

Perhaps because I in due time began to conceive an affection for him; perhaps because father looked with favour upon him; perhaps because—well, chiefly because I wanted to show his cousin, Seth Purvis, that I would have nothing to do with him, and that I had finally made up my mind whom to marry.

The two cousins lived with their uncle, Seth's father. They seemed fond of one another, though their dispositions resembled each other as little as did their faces. I have told you what Tom was like, and, if you understood on what grounds I liked him, you will understand on what grounds I disliked the other. Seth was two years younger than Tom; he had straight, fair hair and a white complexion, and he was stoutly made and short. His eyes were very faint blue, and they glanced up and down, this way and that, never meeting yours, and in a placidly suspicious manner. At times, too, they caught a green tinge, and looked cruel. What I disliked in Seth's appearance applied also to his character. In his heart, as well as in his face, there was a lack of warmth and colour. The fresh, blushing vigour of young blood was wanting. He was staid, not lively, and too calm by half to be good at heart. I don't believe in your placid, cold, smooth people, who never get into a passion, but keep their malice like a pent-up fire within their bosoms until such a time as it may start up in a blaze to do some one or other an ill turn. No; Seth Purvis was not the lad for my money. I was just civil to him, and that was all. He had taken a fancy to me, and would hang about the farm of an evening, time after time. He used to come regularly with Tom Darrell; and it was when Tom was laughing and romping, while Seth sat watching us in his pale way from a corner of the hearth, that one best perceived the difference between the two men. Somehow or other, I think Seth purposely put himself in the way. There was no getting a quiet word with Tom; for his cousin was sure to be close by, smoking his pipe, and opening his ears wide for every word, with a pallid smile. Now and then, too, I saw the green tinge come into his eyes; and it was then that I shuddered, as if in dreadful anticipation of what was to come. I'm not speaking figuratively, mind. When the cruel look came over Seth Purvis, his eyes were coloured with a real gooseberry hue, and looked quite dreadful. Let people say what they will, it is little signs like these which show the character. A good face is really a fortune, and Heaven always means

it to be so; and there may be deformity without ugliness. Pure unmistakable ugliness springs from the heart, in my opinion. There! Satan is never suffered to put on the garment of a fine body without there is some little flaw in the garment by which the eyes of a woman may ascertain who it is that goes masquerading.

Most men are bad hands at reckoning up character just because they can't or won't perceive trifles; but a gossip will show which way the wind blows, and I've often enough learned the time of day by means of a flying tuft of thistledown. Tom Darrell thought Seth Purvis everything that is good; he estimated him at what he seemed, and took his love and friendship for granted. "Seth's the best fellow in the world," he would say, "to me, if one only understood his ways; he's thoughtful, you see, and I'm harem-scarum; but a fonder, better fellow"—and so on. I said nothing; I only liked Tom the more and Seth the less; but it was not my place to cause disunion among relations. Sometimes, indeed, Tom's goodness made me think I was mistaken in Seth. Good men are like light; they throw a radiance over everything with which they come in contact, until it is difficult to separate the good element itself from the men and things it illumines.

And now you shall hear all about my terrible Christmas.

I was twenty-one, and had at last engaged myself to marry Tom Darrell. He had begged and coaxed me so long that I thought it cruel to delay longer; and when my father began to hasten the match (he was afraid of losing Tom) I was quite contented. Seth Purvis saw that his case was a hopeless one, and he pretended to be unconcerned; but I knew that his heart was on fire with rage. He still continued to come visiting with Tom, and to watch us in his pale way, till I quite lost patience and showed him that I was displeased. Well, one day Seth and I happened to be alone in the kitchen. Father was out, and Seth had brought a message from Tom, to the effect that the latter could not keep a certain appointment we lovers had made the night before. Then, all of a sudden, up stood Seth Purvis, smiling.

"Martha!" he said.

"Yes, Seth."

"Are you busy? I want to have a word or two with you."

I looked at him in surprise. Suddenly he caught me round the waist and drew me to him.

"Let me be!" I cried, struggling in his arms. He laughed and kissed me, and I began to scream.

"Hush, Martha!" he whispered fiercely. "Now, what's all this nonsense between you and my cousin Tom?"

"Never you mind, Seth Purvis; and let me go, or I'll tell Tom."

And I struggled in vain to escape.

"Sit you down, Martha, and hold your tongue. I mean to have my talk out with you. Look you, Martha, Tom Darrell doesn't care twopence for you, and I know what I know about another sweetheart of his."

I sprang away this time, with flashing eyes, and stood looking boldly into Seth's pale face.

"You're telling me lies, Seth Purvis!" I cried. "If you don't be quiet you'll get my blood up."

"O, ho! and what then?" exclaimed he with a laugh. "Little I care for your anger, Martha Masters! But, hark you! You don't marry Tom if I can help it; I'd sooner dash your brains out than let you marry him. Do you want to know why I object to the match? Why, simply because I mean to marry you myself."

"Brag's a good dog, Seth, but Holdfast is a better. You're big in words, but—"

"I'll be big in deeds, if you rouse me, my woman. Pooh! don't be a fool. I'm richer and sturdier than Tom; I'm fond of only you, I love you better than he does, and I'll make a lady of you."

I laughed in derision; and I saw his face turn paler as the green light came into his eyes.

"Seth Purvis, I wouldn't be your wife if you were to offer me this room filled with gold."

Immediately afterwards father came home, and Seth went away hurriedly. When I told him the story father laughed, as I had done, but seemed inclined to pity the lad. He had a better opinion of Seth than I had. On consideration I thought it better not to tell Tom of what had taken place; and, strange to say, Seth continued his visits without ever alluding again to the same subject. Once or twice, however, when Tom and I were sitting together and talking in whispers, I saw him watching us with an expression that made me shudder.

It was arranged that Tom and I should be married on New Year's Day. A fortnight before that time I had to go to a town twenty miles away to make purchases. I had an aunt in the town, and I stayed with her till the day before Christmas. I should have returned home two days before, but what with shopping and visiting I was delayed till the last moment. I wrote to Tom asking him to meet the last train at the railway-station, and telling him to come on foot, that we might have the last walk and talk of lovers going home.

Well, the train left at ten. It was a wild, snowy night, with a great white moon, and the air was bitter cold. It had been freezing and snowing for a week past, and the ground was as hard as ice. We rattled along the night in fine style for half an hour, and then we came to a sudden halt. The snow had fallen in at one of the tunnels, and we could not proceed until a clearance had been effected. The task was not so easy. We sat shivering and fidgeting for fully three hours, with the telegraph-wires in perpetual agitation around us, and by the time I reached the station it was half-past one. I was the only passenger who got out at that station. When I looked about in search of Tom, he was nowhere to be seen. I asked the old station-master, but Tom had not been there to his knowledge. Of course I was terribly annoyed.

The station was situated nearly three miles from our house, and the road home was very quiet and lonely. However, that didn't appal me. After waiting half an hour, I made up my mind to start for home by myself. It seemed plain either that something unusual had occurred, or that my friends, taking into consideration the cold, wild weather and the lateness of the hour, had given me up for the night.

With my basket of purchases on my arm, I set off briskly. The distance was nothing to a strong girl like me, and it was simply the lateness of the hour which troubled me. Before I had got a mile on my journey, however, my clothes were wet and freezing cold, and my boots and stockings were full of melting snow. For the snow was more than ankle deep on the road, and I had on thin boots.

However, I pushed on. The road around and before me was white in the moonlight, and the hedges on each side were clothed in snow. No, I was not the least bit nervous. I simply felt annoyed at the delay which had taken place in my arrival. It was Christmas morning; and here was I, trudging along through the cold, while, doubtless, all the countryside was keeping up the festivities after having watched out Christmas Eve.

Halfway between our house and the railway station the country road took a long curve to the west, and a foot-passenger could save at least a mile by taking a short cut down a long dark lane and across some fields. I knew the locality well, and determined to take the shortest way. The lane was full of furze-bushes and brambles; and towards the end of it, where it ran into the fields, there was a small, thicket-wooded plantation. In the centre of the plantation was a deep dry well, called Saul's Well, and said to be haunted. Down this lonely lane I walked, ankle deep in snow. The wind was sighing among the great white branches of the hedge, and shrieking further down among the fir boughs in the distant plantation. It was indeed a wild night for a young girl to be out alone.

Suddenly I halted, and I confess I was frightened at last. I heard a smothered cry just before me, then there was a struggle, and, finally, all again silent. The sound came from the centre of the plantation, which lay just before me, surrounded by a high stone wall.

Scarcely knowing what I did, I crept on timidly. There was another sound, as of somebody dragging a heavy weight across the road. Stooping down under the shadow of the wall I crept to a high furze-bush, which grew for some feet above the wall, and through the branches of which I could look into the plantation. Almost breathless, I looked. The trees within were far apart, and the moon shone brightly on the spaces between them. It was then that I saw that which made me almost faint with horror. A man was dragging a dead or lifeless body along the ground, in the direction of Saul's Well. His back was towards me, but I seemed to recognise him. The burden was a heavy one, but he at last gained the side of the well with it. Stooping and turning for a moment, he dragged it to the brink. There was a dull, leaden sound as of a body falling, and the next moment the man rose to his feet, with his face towards me, in the full light of the moon. It was Seth Purvis.

I had no time to deliberate, for he was coming hastily in my direction. In a moment I crept under shelter of the neighbouring hedge, and stood hidden in the shadow. He had not seen me. He leapt the wall hastily, and hurried off in the direction of the fields. Close to the wall, however, he paused, stooping, and I saw him looking attentively at one of my footprints; he satisfied himself at last, and disappeared. I waited in my hiding-place for several minutes; then I crept out stealthily, and ran as fast as I could back to the highway.

Here my strong nerves served me in good stead. I determined not to yield to my fear and horror until I reached home, and I did not alarm the neighbourhood; but I felt myself grow quite white in the face in the struggle to keep down my agitation. I kept along the highway with a brisk, firm step, and was not more than half a mile from home when Seth Purvis leapt the hedge, and stood quite close to me, with the moon once more upon his pale, bloodless face. With a scream I sprang back, and he approached me quietly.

"Martha!"

"Seth!"

I was determined what to do. Should he suspect that I knew his crime, I would attempt to deceive him. Should he attempt further violence, I would resist to the best of my power. Feeling that my only hope lay in keeping calm and seeming friendly, I walked up and shook him heartily by the hand. I shall never forget the shudder that ran through me as I did so.

"How you frightened me, Seth," I cried. "O, I am so glad I have met you; I felt so alarmed."

He looked at me in a sly, suspicious way, and I fancied that I saw the green light in his eyes.

"What are you afraid of?" he said, roughly. "Why, you're trembling! Are you cold?"

"Very cold indeed. I have had a miserable journey. We were delayed a long time by the snow. I expected some one would have met me at the station, the road is so very lonely."

"Yes, it's lonely enough, especially"—here he was looking at me keenly—"down by Saul's Well."

"Ah, that's a dreadful place, and the girls say it is haunted. However, that lay out of my way."

"Humph!"

I took his arm boldly, and we walked on quickly side by side. I now saw that his dress was slightly disarranged, and that there was a red stain on the front of his shirt. His eye met mine as I looked at this latter.

"What are you looking at, Martha?" he cried, halting suddenly and gazing into my face.

"At that mark on your shirt. Is it blood? Have you hurt yourself? Have you had a fall?"

I was dreadfully agitated, but I managed my agitation in such a way as to make it seem like friendly anxiety on his account. He seemed puzzled.

"Why, ye-es," he muttered; "I had a tumble down among the fields yonder; but it is nothing particular. You needn't mention it to anybody, as it's of no importance."

We were now within a hundred yards of the farm. Suddenly he caught me by the arm and stopped me.

"Do you know, Martha, that I was wandering down the lane by Saul's Well some hours ago when I saw footprints on the snow which seemed to me very like yours. They were a woman's anyhow."

"Indeed," I said with apparent unconcern. "What of that?"

"Oh, nothing; only it seemed strange, that was all."

I was less and less able to control myself as we drew nearer to my father's door. At the door we paused again, he looking at me in a strange, wild way. I knocked at the door.

"Martha Masters, why don't you ask after Tom?"

A sudden horrible suspicion flashed upon me, as he crept close up to me, with his fierce eyes on mine, and hissed the words into my ears. In a moment I was overpowered by my fear; and my face showed the man that I knew his secret. He sprang at me with an oath, and I screamed aloud for help. Footsteps came along the passage; the chain was drawn aside. Seth seized me wildly with his left hand, and with his right held aloft a glittering knife. I drew aside just in time to escape the blow. Before he could raise his hand again my father sprang out from the threshold, and stretched him senseless on the snow with a blow of his cudgel. The farm hands came thronging round.

"Seize him! don't let him escape! He has murdered Tom Darrell, and the dead man is lying cold and bloody at the bottom of Saul's Well."

There was a cry of horror from all, and then consciousness forsook me. I was carried indoors, and lay for a week in a raging fever. When I recovered I had to appear as a witness at Seth Purvis's trial.

It was too true; my fears proved correct. The two cousins had set out to meet me together, and not finding me at the station, and concluding that I had been detained in town, had returned towards home in company. Then Seth Purvis, in his mad jealousy, had stabbed Tom Darrell to the heart and had thrown him to the bottom of Saul's Well.

Seth Purvis was hung, and no one ever came to supply murdered Tom Darrell's place.

THIRTY THOUSAND POUNDS;

OR, THE LEAF I TURNED OVER LAST YEAR.

THE unkind things said about money by those who never—ungrateful people—had an opportunity of knowing the want of it are too numerous and too well known to need repetition to any reader familiar with the "best authors" through the medium of "elegant extracts." "Best authors" are the only poor who are privileged beings, and become exceptions to the rule, and even they are not, as a rule, believed. "Money is the root of all evil" is an easy thing to say, but a modern philosopher—who is now gnashing his teeth having no other occupation for them—says that want of money is all evil itself. Any man who has knocked about the world—that is, who has been knocked about by the world; any man who has arrived at the ripeness of twenty-four, by which time, as Jean Paul says, the destinies of the world partially rest upon him; any man with the humility to confess that no man can be utterly virtuous in the great scheme, will make up his mind to have his virtues, if he can be sufficiently unfortunate, fatly leavened with the dross of a certain evil in the shape of so much solid coinage of the realm. Even poor curates have consented to be made rich bishops; Cicinnatus did not hold out very long; and there is nothing like turtle and venison to help the truly pious over the rough and charitable stones of founding a soup-kitchen. Money is the finest thing in the world, because it leads to the finest things, or is, at all events, that "golden mean," the "next best

thing," to most men; nevertheless, almost all young people set out with the idea that the mare may be made to go very well without it.

Within the memory of ephemeral animals still living, I shared the common fallacy respecting the unenviable attributes of the mare. The world seemed to be preposterously too big for all humanity likely to come upon it, despite the vaccination laws, the baby-jumpers, and other recent inventions favourable to infantile welfare. My place of rest was inexpensive, and three penny omnibuses ran like debtors. With no more exertion than served to keep me in excellent health and spirits I paid my way, and, as Mr. Longfellow says, "owed not any man" either money or gratitude. There I was, likely to die in harness that did not gall, when suddenly my fortune was made, simply because I discovered that I was poor. I had a passion. To some men fame may be the spur that shall raise the clear spirit; but, if ever I am to have such an infirmity, it certainly shall be the very last of my noble mind. The spur that I felt, and not without the customary kicks, was that which every man has but all do not know, or heed—Love. Because Violet Trellis was—was, to say it at once, all that a young lady should be to be loved by a young gentleman, and was, in addition, the owner of ten thousand pounds sterling, it might appear that my views were just a shade mercenary; but I can lay my pen upon a sheet of paper and honestly deny it. To work a little harder, in so good and dearly-loved a cause, and with such blue-eyed, affectionate encouragement, appeared nothing. Her ten thousand pounds might all have been laid out in Great Eastern shares, or in buying bandanas for little blacks, rather than my happiness—our happiness—should have been delayed one week. Violet herself was as simple—never mind the babe unborn—as simple as the best of human nature in its youthful prime, before it has known contact with French plays or ballroom flirtations. She agreed to all that I said, and reciprocated; and that seemed sufficient. But there happened to be a not unimportant something which we had forgotten, or rather neglected. Mr. Trellis! The Cup and the Lip might be the title of many an every-day comedy or tragedy. In this case it was a tragedy. Trellis ought to have known what was going on; but he swore that he did not. Violet volunteered, thinking it best to break the ice to the old gentleman. She did so; and, then, not all the Royal Humane Society's attendants, with surgeon Mc'Cann at their head, could save her. The ice was indeed so broken that old Trellis had it marked "dangerous," and warned all comers to keep off.

Violet came to me.

"I am very sorry, Alfred—Mr. —," she hastily added. "Papa says I must never see you again, because you are not rich enough."

I pictured papa at eight o'clock on a Monday morning in the precincts of the Old Bailey. Is it worth while to give a notion of the tone of our remaining conversation?

"But you do not think so?" I cried. "Your own Alfred is all that you care for. You cannot consent to make us both wretched for life by attending to what a wretched old —"

"Stop! Not one word against papa. I am sure he is the best papa that ever lived, and I would not do what he wished me not for all the Aldres in the world; and I shall hate you if you say a word against my papa." By this time there were sobs in plenty.

"On, very well. Then good-by!"—but somehow a slight feminine hold prevents a man getting away, especially if he wishes to remain. "If you're going to have a cab home, perhaps you wouldn't mind putting this bundle of hair that a faithless girl gave me on the roof? It's rather heavy." And I carefully buttoned my coat tight over the left breast. The little hand got inside and stayed there.

"How unkind, Alf; how unkind! And I'm so wretched I shall die." "Waterloo-bridge? oxalic acid? or tight-lacing?"

But the ironical style I did exasperate. It was of no use. My own spirits and nerves were quite unstrung; and we parted, "for ever," in a style that would have shamed the fountains in Trafalgar-square. The dear, innocent little girl clung to her father as if he had been a sheet-an-hor—he was quite as hard and unyielding—and it seemed as if her "best bower" was a bower of anything but roses and love.

In about one week from that evening I knew the market mornings at Covent-garden, Copenhagen-fields, Hungerford, Billingsgate, Clare, and Newgate. I knew precisely what beggars I should find asleep, at what hours, on whose door-steps. The secret mysteries of the maternal police were mine. The late taverns, the gaming-houses, and much worse, were familiar. I could have written "Lives of the Goff-stall-keepers." Talk of draining life to the dogs! I began with the dogs, and very soon had more than enough of that "next best thing" for the disappointed. Once more in my home, and calm, I wrote entreating letters; they were returned unopened. I tried to fall in love with one of my cousins—ugh! I tried to get up an imaginary passion on the Cowley principle. I learned by heart all the abuse that poets have written about women—and added to it. I abandoned all society. Next I courted it. More returns.

One morning I woke up and found myself quite rational. Time—a few short months—had restored me to serenity; and it occurred to me that, if time could do so much, it would be well to wait calmly and see what more could follow. In the meantime I would not neglect time, but would "place my house in order," rearrange my unsettled business affairs, hope for the best, but try not to think about it. Not that there was any diminution in my affection for Violet Trellis, but there was just a dash of indignation. Poor girl! As months passed on, and circumstance changed, this feeling of indifference, with intermittent fits of penitence, increased. Soon a fresh subject engrossed my whole attention.

I so dislike talking on unpleasant subjects that, as yet, I have not even mentioned any of my relatives. There were just a few—almost strangers to me—well off, and cordial haters of anything in the way of poverty. One day one of these good old souls took it into his head—where "it" must have felt all the joys of solitude—to die; and, by some accident in the will, I came in for five thousand pounds. The lawyers tried hard: even Hampshire of the Parliamentary Bar had a brief, but they could not keep the money. Five thousand pounds! Perhaps I again tried Violet—perhaps was successful—and perhaps my story is over. By no means; that would have been too ignominious, and, moreover, old Trellis would have wanted at least double my legacy to match his daughter's fortune. The thought scarcely crossed my brain. But one day I was ardently meditating on what I really should do with the largest sum of money I should ever have in the world. Should I buy stock or shares, farm in Canada, start the *Haymarket Magazine*, or spend it?—when a friend, or, rather let me say, an acquaintance, came to see me. His proved to be a worse dilemma than my own. He had not heard of my recent slice of luck, though, nor I of his. He was very nervous, as he saw that I was at dinner—plain mutton chops and so on, with "kitchen wines," port and sherry. Whilst I was replenishing the fire he had been cannoning off from sofa to chair, from chair to sofa. At last he "held" himself into the snug seat and commented: "You've heard me speak of Old Brickson? Well, he's dead. Strange old boy; rich as Cæsar; spoony on house property; got nothing in the world, but no end of houses. Apologies in his will for having no money, and has left me a house in town to buy a mourning-ring—mourning d—!! Any objection to a fellow having one of these chops? Hard up, and had nothing all day long."

The privilege was of course conceded. Fair dinners were made—the grief of the newly-fledged houseowner by no means interfering with a naturally strong tendency not to restrict a sportsmanlike appetite—the port was opened, and conversation took the only possible turn.

"Mad as a hatter!" commenced Swellby. "A hundred thousand pounds—all in bricks and mortar!"

"Whereabouts is it situated?"

"St. Plush-square; next door to old Thingumbob, the what-d'ye-call-it?—he that lends sovereigns to Crowns."

"Any furniture?"

"Heaps!"

"Then you should wear it on your charms." This was received with a roar of laughter. I was meditating.

"It ought to sell for a good sum," my friend resumed. "A fine house is of no use to my back when I haven't a shilling in my pocket. But, lor! the money would all go in less than no time."

"The common practice with money in the hands of the improvident," said I gravely. "Does no plan suggest itself? Think? I see a plan already by which you might live all your days in affluence on that pile of bricks and mortar. It is worth an annuity to you. Making a rough calculation, I should say it ought to be worth two or three hundred a-year to you."

"Who would be green enough to give it, I should like to know?"

In a few words I explained to Swellby all about my five thousand pounds, and referred him to my solicitor. Next day the real value of the house, and Swellby's probable life, were correctly ascertained; and before many days had elapsed I was owner of the big house in St. Plush-square, and happy as a Prince over my bargain, as indeed was Swellby.

Swellby, poor young man, has so far had a strong but simple connection with the story of two years of my life. His fate, however, exercised over mine a remarkable influence. Suddenly flung into the possession of a fair income, and with an intolerable amount of time on his hands—at least twenty-four hours every day—he took to certain unhappy courses not uncommon to those who experience a sudden change from bad to good estate. His very short life was one of dissipation, and *delirium tremens* finished his career.

The poor fellow's death shocked me, of course; but very soon I could but perceive how I had doubled my property at the expense of £300 in about ten months. I had paid the annuity but for one year when the house in St. Plush-square became my own, and with my legacy made up quite sufficient wherewith to face old Trellis. But I did nothing of the kind. Not only was I indifferent to, and enraged with, Violet—the sudden accumulation of wealth had made me avaricious. When first I had proposed the annuity to young Swellby I had seen a kind of Royal road to fortune-making, and I now determined to back my luck, and carry out one of the strangest schemes that ever entered human brain. Next door to my house, it will be remembered, lived the human being so irreverently described by Swellby as "Thingumbob," who was, in fact, neither more nor less than the celebrated —, *the richest man in the world*. I knew that he intended to build the newest house in all London, by way of humbling the miserly Marquis a door or two off. He had bought up at tremendous prices three houses on his left, and now possessed the site up to the Marquis's walls; but that was not sufficient to gratify his ambition: to make his new palace sufficiently grand nothing would do but he must have a house or two to the right. He was obliged to come to me, and I knew I had him under my thumb. I had him safely on the books, and I flatter myself I am not a bad hand at landing, no matter what weight.

He very soon came, and explained. He was very rich, and did not mind paying to gratify his whims. He had set his heart on the matter, and, of course, I had my price—what was it? He did not mind even so ridiculously disproportionate a sum as £5,000.

I laughed. He stared. I explained that I was a very poor man; and that to a poor man the gratification of a whim, apparently at the price of £5,000, was far more pleasant than anything of the kind could be to a rich man who could command everything. I would state no sum that might tempt me. He went away talking about a compromise; and next day a letter from a legal firm acquainted me that my millionaire—he was that endless times over—would be willing to give me £7,000 for my house in St. Plush-square. But I knew my man, and how he could not bear the thought of being disappointed in any matter that ought to be settled by money. The more indifferent I became the more he offered. I swore that I never placed my happiness on money, which aggravated him to the point of adding on a thousand or two by way of showing how easily he could part with gold. £10,000? No!

For three months I had not once thought of Violet Trellis. Money is the "next best thing." But, just when it was evident, about a year ago, that I must immediately become possessed of a pretty fortune, I did think of her, and of the delight of being rich, and of being able to punish such base conduct by deserting her in turn. But there was something to be done before getting all the fortune I required. It was necessary to settle matters quickly. He had had fresh plans drawn out, fresh architectural models made, so confident was he that I should soon give way, as, indeed, I had already shown some symptoms of doing; for I had settled my price at just a few thousand pounds more. These I secured in one week. Disguised with "lovely woman," I gave a bachelor's party, and instructed my friends to be as noisy as they pleased. "Christmas-time, lads!" said I. And, indeed, they did make a noise all over the square; and next door must have suffered awfully. My rich neighbour was unfortunately shut up with gout, and they say that he stormed with fury at the noise. Next morning I took a leaf from the facetious inhabitants of Dorset-street, and engaged a concert of blacks with cardboard shirt-collars. How my poor neighbour endured it is more than I can say. I fear he suffered. But he was too proud and too lame to chase the musicians to a police court; and besides, he was no scientific Mr. Babbage, although it must be owned I was not a bad imitation of the "calculating-machine"! But I did not stop there. I enticed a heavy-listed cousin from the country, and she destroyed two big pianos in as many days. Cheeks nearly blew his brains out on the cornopæan; and I gave permission to my house-keeper for her little boy to play on his poor dear father the drummer's real regimental drum. I married my fat cousin, from my own house, to a lavishly-lunged Northern, and the commotion he and his friends made all day long was the talk of the neighbourhood. Two consecutive nights my foolish, nervous man, John Thomas, fancied there was fire, and such a bother with half a dozen engines never was. The butler, a very suggestive man, and of a good family, wanted to establish a ghost; but that I would not allow, for fear of deteriorating the property. However, I allowed a peculiar friend to play a repetition of the Berners-street hoax on myself, and such a scene of confusion ensued that I really felt for my poor gouty neighbour. But it is needless to describe the variety of accidents that happened in my house during that one week. It is sufficient to say that I was just meditating on lively Dr. Johnson's saying about burning asafetida, and wondering about its legality in the present day, when the clerk called from Messrs. Mark and Noble, the solicitors, Lower Class-street, with a letter on the old subject.

"Thirty thousand pounds! as I'm a living sinner!" I signed, I sealed, I delivered.

Thirty thousand pounds! I like to gaze on the words again. With my mind's hand I hung an impalpable cap in imaginary air and rushed out. Well I might. I was houseless; but, with a lively balance at my banker's, that was nothing. Claridge became my home until I could look about me, and, indeed, I was half blind with joy. The leaf of love had been turned over, and the next page was a Bank-of-England note for a sum next to impossible to be believed. It was well done to banish visions from the mind and take golden realities for my platform. The handsomest marble covered the remains of poor Swellby, and a sum equivalent to one year's annuity was spread over good charities. These pious labours accomplished, I devoted myself to my friends and to the cultivation of the new leaf that succeeded the miserably-blurred page I had turned over. Orgies unknown since the days of Carillon House were established, always managed with a due regard to my own health. A man with ten thousand pounds in each of his breeches-pockets, and waistcoat hung to a similar tune, is not the man to trifle with his constitution, I can tell you. Mr. Dieraldi's "Young Duke" would not even "play tricks with his complexion;" and my Lord Fifth rammed his commission in a mortar and left off soldiering. And so I took example by them and great care of myself.

It went on some months pleasantly enough. My horses always won; my skipper sailed the *Pansy* to perfection, and won every cup. Why did I call her the *Pansy*? Perhaps there was a something graceful as the gracefullest on the waters, as pure, and with purity as perpetual and unchanging, that I wished to remember. A pansy, a heartease, a love-in-idleness; for the poet's pet flower is a Trinity love-emblem. Why not the "Violet"?—but I had, or fancied I had, quite forgotten the faithless Miss Trellis. Gradually I began to find my habitual

companions wearisome, and almost unconsciously I found I was cutting them one by one, through the simple process of putting my name on their bills. They never came again. "His Honour" only knows what has become of them.

Only so late as the November of last year things changed. The 4th had been a rather late night. The boys and their guys had awakened me early to the inevitable headache, and I turned out into the parks to walk it off. There was nothing fresh. The American divers disappeared for fish, and the "valuable collection of aquatic birds" was depriving Lazarus of the crumbs from Dives' table. Boom!—boom! suddenly. People thought the *Hero* and *Ariadne* had arrived, with our dear young Prince smoking a cigar as long as a walking-stick; but it was the anniversary of Inkerman; and I thought of the glory gained, and the hearts broken at home. And yet, I mused, great Nature never breaks a heart for death—it is for something worse than death—no poet's fable. And there is surely a girl whose heart is breaking, if ever —

Lilies and passion-flowers! I hardly knew her. Less than two years had almost killed my Violet. How little time it took for explanation, and the explanation itself, must be imagined. They are always the simplest things in real life that affect our fates. In my case, Violet was dying of love, and old Trellis had intercepted all my letters. It wouldn't do for three vols. post 8vo, truly; but, then, who wants them?

Violet says she has "proved the power of love." I tell her (my mother was from one of the Western Isles) that I have proved a power of money!

We have fixed the day for the 24th inst.—a Tuesday—vulgar, unfashionable. But then it has this advantage, that every one who may happen to read this round their Christmas fire, and thinking all that the beautiful word suggests, will know that two happy human beings have double reason to bless Christmas, and that they will dream of sorrows and battles, of *Herodes* and *Ariadnes*, never, never more.

E. F. B.

CHRISTMAS-BOXING.

THERE has been lately a by no means irrational opposition to the extortions to which most of us half-voluntarily submit in the shape of fees and gratuities to those whose proper business it is to render us such services as they are paid to perform without seeking any especial reward for doing their duty.

In an article in the *Coruhill Magazine* the writer speaks with startling distinctness of the mean motives which lie at the bottom of this absurd system of gratuities, and, by an *argumentum ad hominem* which very few of us can consistently deny, declares that it proceeds not so much from the gratification of a generous or benevolent disposition as from the fear of acquiring a character for meanness amongst people whose opinions are very little worthy of consideration, and who trade upon the power that they know they have established amongst those weak enough to regard their greedy claims. It is certainly no very creditable system which upholds the constant demands upon the purse of the visitor, who, on leaving a house where he may have been served more or less assiduously, finds that he is expected to fee the domestics at a rate higher than that of a first-class hotel. And yet there may well be a kindly recognition now and then of services cheerfully rendered. What says "Mr. Brown" in those "letters to his nephew," which the caustic humourist (some say the "cynical satirist") who now presides over that *Coruhill Magazine* gave us so long ago—"I would say respecting your commerce with friends' servants and your own: be thankful to them, and they will be grateful to you in return, depend upon it. Let the young fellow who lives in lodgings respect the poor little maid who does the wondrous work of the house, and not send her on too many errands, or ply his bell needlessly; if you visit any of your comrades in such circumstances, be you, too, respectful and kind in your tone to the poor little Abigail. If you frequent houses, as I hope you will, where are many good fellows and amiable ladies who cannot afford to have their doors opened, or their tables attended by men, pray, be particularly courteous to the women-servants. Thank them when they serve you; give them a half-crown now and then, nay, as often as your means will permit. Those small gratuities make but a small sum in your year's expenses, and it may be said that the practice of giving them never impoverished a man yet; and, on the other hand, they give a deal of innocent happiness to a very worthy, active, kind set of folks."

So speaks the cynic, and there are few of our readers who will not agree with him, especially during the happy, generous season when, under the name of Christmas-boxes, so much money is expended, some of it kindly and wisely—more of it, perhaps, from a motive which has its grounds in a really selfish dread of a character for meanness. But in this as in most other matters of social observance the great matter is to make proper distinctions. Of the score of licensed beggars who besiege our steps on the morning following Christmas Day five, perhaps, may deserve some notice at our hands, if not for their services at least for their necessities. It is well to make a selection, and then let no hand be opened except that of the "cheerful giver"—no demand, but only a reasonable appeal, be listened to.

That Christmas-boxes were derived from some custom of antiquity is very probable; but their adoption in our own country, along with numerous other methods of audacious begging, is attributable to that keen sense of advantage which belonged to the priests of the Romish Church. At a very early period it was customary for the servants and apprentices to provide themselves with a jar or box destined to contain the gratuities which were expected from visitors. To each of these the box was presented before his departure, so that by Christmas-tide it contained no small amount. The box being broken open at this season the sum was appropriated by the priest as his "shriving fee," and the box itself in which were hoarded the whole year's gratuities was called the "Christ's mass box." A wonderful incentive to giving must have been furnished by the fear of being deemed not only parsimonious but irreligious. With the decline of the Papacy in England, the custom remained, but was considerably modified in its practice and entirely changed in its application. The name "Christmas-boxes" came to mean Christmas gifts, and were mostly confined to that particular season. The mode of collecting them, however, was too profitable to be lightly abandoned, and at the period represented in our Engraving was still preserved in its exterior integrity. The gratuities were claimed at the house-door from the departing guests; and from this circumstance the particular perquisite of the servants came to be called "vails"—doubtless a below-stairs corruption of "vales," or farewells.

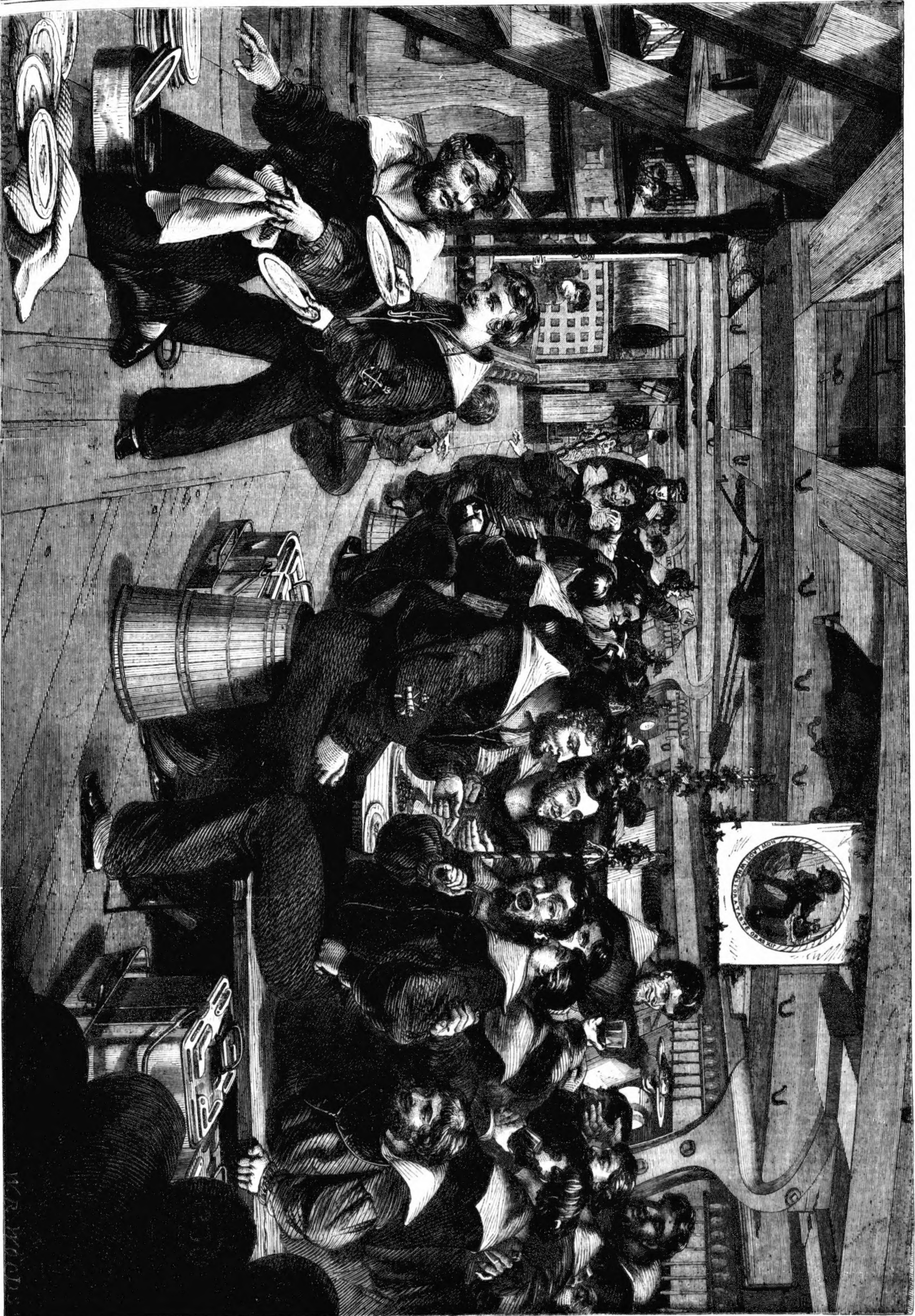
It may easily be matter of surprise, considering the tenacity with which vested rights are preserved, that in our own time the custom has dwindled to such a small observance; with which comfortable reflection let us, as much as may be, respect its relics, remembering that, if no other excuse remains for it, it may at least commend itself by the fact of its coming "only once a year."

CHRISTMAS BETWEEN DECKS.

THE probability of a war with America looms darkly over our Christmas festivities, and, amidst the preparations for keeping good cheer, the ring of hearty greetings, the notes of the holiday carol, we may hear the mustering of armed men, the din of hammers and anvils, beating night and day to make ready the weapons of illwill, the busy pushing forward of work in dockyards and arsenals. With the consciousness that the quarrel is not of our seeking, we may look the dread necessity calmly in the face—not the less so from the knowledge that we are able to hold our own. Our readers will have



THE CHRISTMAS-BOX.



A CHRISTMAS DINNER IN THE FORECASTLE OF THE PENDHOCK MAN-OF-WAR.

read the names of the vessels already commissioned to form the fleet, and may recognise in the *Pembroke*—on board which the scene in our Engraving was witnessed—one of the earliest mentioned. Whatever troubles may lie hidden in the future, men must eat, and it is no part of the philosophy of the British sailor to give to foreboding time which may be more pleasantly occupied. Nay, it may be doubted whether some of the old seadogs do not enjoy with a keener relish the amusements which may so soon be followed by stern work and the certainty of danger. There, on the lower deck of the *Pembroke*, are spread the tables, bedight, in true sailor-fashion, with ornaments ingeniously contrived—that of the gunnery instructor, in the foreground, being a marvel of needlework ornamentation and embroidery, carefully superintended by the officer himself in full insignia. At once the band has paraded the deck, playing the "Roast Beef of Old England," and followed by the Captain, the officers, and such visitors as may happen to be on board. The seats of honour are duly taken by the persons entitled thereto: the seat of honour at a mess-table consisting, in fact, of the biscuit-tub, or, as it is called by the men, the "bread-barge." This is the seat of the cook of the mess pro-tem. The more substantial portion of the feast is soon discussed, the soup-cans, plates, and potato-dishes are cleared away, and the entrance of the pudding is regarded as the principal event. It is a great time for the boys on these occasions; for, in the genial Christmas spirit so often readily evoked in the roughest sailor that ever growled a gruff command, they are duly installed in the mock dignity of officers for the time being, and during their temporary promotion are decorated with the crown and anchor on their left sleeve. To the youngest boy of all the terrible boatswain himself resigns the potent cord and whistle, at the same time investing him with that authority before which, for this day at least, he need no longer quail.

This is not all: the great joke of the matter is that there is supposed to be an entire exchange of identity, and the grim officer mockingly accepts those menial offices usually executed by his representative. With what a surprised expression he is "taken aback" by the order delivered in a voice which is but a squeak at its gruffest, to "bear a hand with the plates," or to "be a little matter lively there with clearing away." May both man and boy do their duty well when the time comes, as there is no doubt they will; and may they all of them love each other better for their Christmas kept between decks.

THE CHALLENGE.

HE is one of the most peaceful men in the world, is my father, and would no more think of fighting a man—Frenchman or any other—without the strongest provocation, than he would dream of deliberately kissing that Frenchman on both cheeks, or growing a moustache! And yet he once, with the most innocent intention, and without a shadow of a motive, challenged a Frenchman to mortal combat on his own soil, and kept that respectable Gaul in a state of terror for a whole day and night: and this is how it came to pass.

Out of the last eight years up to this day we spent the first five—my father, mother, and I—in the town of Caen, in Normandy. I attended the daily classes of the Government College; and the greater part of this pleasant time we passed in an old house in the Rue de Bretagne.

This Rue de Bretagne is in the environs of Caen, an uneven road winding over the steep hill undermined by the old stone-quarries, long exhausted, of the Quarter Calix, which extend vast distances underground in the neighbourhood. About midway in its whole length this Rue—more like a village road than town street—winds round the high massive walls of the ancient convent, now hospital, the *Hôtel Dieu*; while, on the other hand, the backs of a straggling line of houses facing the valley, linked by their long garden walls, offer an equally blank appearance. Here and there you perceive a narrow chasm in one of these garden walls, the entrance to a little blind, tortuous alley filled with rough stones, like the dry bed of a hill stream, down which if you are indifferent to strong smells and sights, you can descend, stumbling and knocking your elbows against either wall, to the inferior street, the Rue Basse.

At this turn of the road stood our old house, its mansard and chimney-pots just peeping over its high garden walls, which stood out upon the road, forming a right-angle with the preceding house, in which recess was the sole entrance to our little citadel, a double green door opening into the garden. The old house, smothered in vines, roses, and white jasmine, stood within the charming little garden, inclosed on three sides by its high walls lined with fruit-trees, and on the fourth open to the south from a terrace thirty feet above the grounds below, the town, its quays, and surrounding prairies spreading a beautiful landscape below and in the distance. Now, it was from the taking of this very house that ensued the exceeding discomfiture to a Frenchman which I have mentioned above.

A few weeks after our arrival in France, tired of French hotel life, my father and mother fixed upon the house in the Rue de Bretagne for our future habitation. *Mme. Vipont*, the ugliest of elderly French proprietors, in view of our nationality, felt it her duty to exact a very high rent for her old house, and accomplished that undertaking with the greatest success. Having thus made a bad bargain, we were warned to have it put in legal shape; and, accordingly, Monsieur Desruisseaux, avocat, residing in the heart of the town, was recommended for the purpose of drawing up an agreement between ourselves and the *Vipont*.

It was a busy time purchasing furniture, arranging for its removal, and painfully translating the long bills relating thereto; and the day of our departure from the hotel for our new dwelling soon arrived. At ten o'clock on the morning of that day Monsieur Desruisseaux, it was arranged, would bring the aforesaid agreement to our hotel to receive my father's signature before we emigrated to the Rue de Bretagne. It is observable, however, that law, like the tide, though it waits for no man, often makes a man wait a very long time for it—a proposition which was practically demonstrated on this occasion by Monsieur Desruisseaux putting in no appearance at ten, eleven, or twelve o'clock at the place and day appointed.

By this time of day I had been already several hours at college, and my father and mother, finding it impossible to wait any longer for the professional gentlemen, started off in different directions, my mother to the new house, and my father to hunt up the lawyer, and bring him, if possible, to the Rue de Bretagne, where the agreement could be signed and verified on the spot itself. While he is wending his way to the residence of Monsieur Desruisseaux, please lend me your most particular attention to the following statement.

Notwithstanding his otherwise excellent nature, there are a few peculiarities in my father which I cannot avoid here alluding to. I regret to say he is very shortsighted, and that, phenologically speaking, he has no bump of locality; by which I mean to express there are great odds against his being able to return to any given place, or to go to that place twice by the same road. From the preceding cause he is also apt to confound two or more separate and individual persons, such as Jones and Robinson, together; to forget both or all these gentlemen, or pass either of them by in an unconscious way, which may serve him very well with a bad acquaintance, but which is generally calculated to throw the person present, if interested in him, into a perspiration of mental anxiety. I am sorry to say that his ideas respecting Messieurs Leroux and Lechoux, and other French gentlemen and places, would often be served up on the social board of conversation like to a dish of frogs as cleverly produced by the French cooks, so well disguised you could not tell them from young chickens.

After these premonitory observations, I have an important fact to disclose. Instead of there being one sole and identical Monsieur Desruisseaux in the town of Caen, avocat, there happened to be two separate and individual men of that watery name severally preying upon their fellow citizens under the shapes of lawyer and physician.

They were cousins: they both lived in the same street, both inhabited chambers on the ground floor, approachable in either case by a courtyard. Here was a pitfall for a man like my father to run blindfold upon. To borrow an expression from our allies, the Turks, Allah is great! he might go to the right man in the right place; but as the same-intelligent people observe, Mahomet is his prophet! he might also turn up the wrong court, and deliver to Peter the message intended for Paul.

I shall not inform you at present whether he did or did not go to the right place: I have merely to say that by some means or other, direct or indirect, he discovered the street, found out the name, and turned up a courtyard. On opening the door he found the anti-room guarded by a small boy. "Where is Monsieur Desruisseaux?" said my father to the boy abruptly, in very indifferent French. There is another of my father's peculiarities I forgot to mention. When he has one very strong idea in his head, which is usually the case, he is apt to speak and act in a manner totally independent of the surrounding person's feelings, looks, or observations.

The small boy, after paying due homage to the unexpected arrival of a foreign savage, replied that Monsieur Desruisseaux was out; would Monsieur write his message? presenting a small scrap of paper of the thinnest texture to which matter of this kind can be applied. It was upon this small scrap of paper, at the suggestion of the diminutive attendant, that my father produced his one dominant idea and the words of that idea took the form of—powers above!—of a challenge—"Monsieur, je vous attends No.—, Rue de Bretagne."

Now, I don't say this was the wrong house or the wrong Mr. Desruisseaux; but, just supposing it was, mark the awful significance of those words to a stranger and a Frenchman, "Sir, I await you, No.—, Rue de Bretagne." The small boy received the paper bearing these words which he examined with that facetious manner peculiar to monkeys, and stared at my father till he disappeared round the corner.

Later in that afternoon Monsieur Desruisseaux, avocat, made his appearance at No.—, Rue de Bretagne. He had, doubtless, received the message left at his chambers? No, pardon! he had the misfortune to be detained in court on a case then going forward, and missed the hour of appointment, but, having learnt our address at the hotel, had immediately hurried up with the document which he held in his hand. A message left by Monsieur at his rooms? He came thence at that very moment, and had received no message whatever;—very curious, but n'importe; there he was, and here the document, which, having been duly sealed, signed, and delivered, Monsieur Desruisseaux pocketed his fee and went his way.

Noon the following day found a July sun blazing in full vigour over the town of Caen, glowing upon the tapered spires and ancient belfries of its many churches vowed to as many saints; the temperature in the streets was stifling; even the double row of old elm trees upon the ground court by the riverside could not tempt its habitual loungers to take their morning stroll under their sun scorched branches. Crossing the market-place—where but a few of its venerable stall-women huddled, with their green stock, under the shade of immense cotton umbrellas, were enduring the fierce rays of the sun—you might have walked down to the barrack house, where the little, red-trousered militia were sitting at their long rows of open windows, with no other cloth habiliments than those said nether garments, gazing listlessly at the sparkling stream of the Arne as it flowed before their eyes. You might have paced along the deserted quays strewn with bales of wool, casks of Colza oil, and blocks of Caen stone, waiting untended for embarkation at some indefinite period, and passed as quickly as possible the Poissonnière, doing its best to propagate its whereabouts by the most penetrating of piscine exhalations; and no other locality would you have discovered where the traveller, forced to toil his way up a rugged hill, became in his person a more prominent object for the sun to blaze upon overhead, or felt his lower extremities more thoroughly baked by the heat reflected from the stony road, than in that favoured street the Rue de Bretagne—woe betide him!

While this noonday heat was basking under the walls of the hospital flanking that weary road, the bell-chain dangling by the side of the grim door in the high garden wall in that vicinity received an abrupt and energetic pull, from which ensued a peal in the interior sufficiently alarming.

My mother was standing alone in the house, in the midst of a chaos of furniture, measuring the whole with an accurate eye, whilst waiting the arrival of my father and men with an additional supplement, when the sudden displacement of the bell-wire produced so violent a commotion at its inmost extremity. After the first natural shock consequent thereto, she went out to the garden door and peeped through the keyhole: a small patch of blue sky seen through an iron tube proved the unsatisfactory result of this primary observation. My mother cautiously opened the door; there stood a tall gaunt Frenchman, looking as if he rather expected some one would spring out upon him. He bore the traces of his journey up that long, stony hill in the burning sun: the hair was matted on his brows, and large drops of perspiration ran down his cheeks; he was notwithstanding trembling with excitement, and had buttoned up his long black coat tightly to the chin.

"Where?" he demanded abruptly, passing his handkerchief over his face. "Where was the proprietor of this house?"

A suspicion that this visitor might be a disguised agent of the police, or on a second look at him an escaped lunatic, flashed across my mother's mind. "The proprietor," she explained with agitation, "was not at home."

"Heim?" He had loosened a button of his coat to take something from an inner pocket, and this he held out: "Voilà!" He had received it from his domestic.

It was a thin, crumpled, dirty strip of paper. The writing, originally cramped, had become from much handling nearly illegible; but the words ran thus: "Monsieur, je vous attends No.—, Rue de Bretagne—signed—ALFRED B.—." My father's name to such an unnatural citation! My mother looked in blank astonishment at the tall Frenchman, at the scrap of paper, at the green door, down the road, and ended at last by doubting her own senses. "Was this, she muttered, 'Alfred' upon the paper?"

"Oh! Dick! Tom! Bill! Arry! N'importe," cried the Frenchman, throwing up his arms. "Speak Inglesh."

My mother did attempt to continue the conversation in "Inglesh," and it soon became painfully evident that the tall Frenchman knew much less of that language than my mother knew of his, which rendered it compulsory to reassume the French tongue as a medium.

There was no help for it. My mother understood neither the Frenchman nor the paper. There was no alternative but to wait till somebody supervened who could explain one or both of them. It was under these circumstances that my mother made that apparently simple proposal "to step in and wait a few minutes," which excited that Frenchman in such an extraordinary degree.

"Ah! non! non!" he screamed, drawing back and darting a rapid glance at the green door. "Non! non!"

The man was evidently excessively apprehensive of being decoyed inside that door, and somebody there concealed springing upon him the moment it closed behind his back. Having successfully resisted this artfully-concocted ambush, he again pulled out his handkerchief and wiped his face with a trembling hand.

My mother was now approaching that painful state of mind commonly denominated "your wit's end;" at last it occurred to her suddenly to inquire, "What was the Frenchman's name?"

"Desruisseaux; le Docteur Desruisseaux."

"Desruisseaux?" That name seemed familiar to her. "Desruisseaux? Ah! that was the name of the lawyer who drew up the lease: a Monsieur Desruisseaux, an avocat."

The change that passed over that Frenchman's countenance when my mother began faltering out this doubtful explanation could only be likened to the transformation-scene in a pantomime. The muscles

of his whole physiognomy expanded into the blandest of smiles.

He took off his hat, made a series of bows, unbuttoned his coat—"A—ah!"—he drew a deep breath as a man disburdened of a fearful load of anxiety. "C'est mon cousin, the avocat. A mistake, Madame. I comprehend. Pardon!—(bowing)—Pardon!—(bowing still lower)—Pardon!" (another bow)—and, replacing his hat, he walked away from the door, to my mother's infinite relief.

Of course I had this account from my mother on my return from college. When it was concluded, I threw one glance at the paternal countenance. My father seemed to consider some justification necessary on his part, for he observed, "Oh, lord! they both lived in the same street, and how should he know which was which?"

And that was all he had to say in defence of keeping a Frenchman in a state of anguish for the whole space of four-and-twenty hours.

PHANTOMS IN THE FIRE.

BY SHELDON CHADWICK.

Upward is flashing the firelight,
How weird in its gloom and glare!
Do I gaze on a palace enchanted,
Or pillar of promise there?
While on his white horse rides Winter,
And the night is growing grey,
I sit like a weary swallow
Which speeds with the sun away.
The woods are stripped, and the leaves are sere,
And the snow-shroud wraps the young dead year.

Round and round it is rolling,
The world's great Vanity Fair,
Though lives be crushed in the struggle,
There is not a soul to care.
Furious and fast is spinning
The whirlingig flaunting gay.
They ride who have money plenty,
They swelter who cannot pay;—
I see them all in the smoke and flame—
Ambition and Fashion, and Pride, and Fame!

The pencilling power of vision
Paints pictures in fancy's loom,
And lineaments of the distant
Those fantastic forms assume.
The burning coals and the vapours
I shape into wondrous things;
The dead, the unborn, and the living
Are passing on flaming wings.
There stands as of yore the empty chair,
And fancy beholds a dear one there.

My life like a book is opened,
I carefully scan each page,
Inscribed with my sins and sorrows,
A numerous heritage.
Memory limneth before me
The Past, like a dark graveland,—
And ghosts of promises broken
Stalk through it in mournful band;
The radiant hopes, and the day-dreams dead,
The bliss dissolved, and the glory fled.

Those torches of flame are lighting
My thoughts to the long ago,
Fair faded faces of childhood
Again are with life a glow;
I see a cradle and coffin,
A babe and a little shroud,
A launch, a voyage, a tempest,
A bright star set in a cloud;
Visions which charmed youth's fervent soul,
But turned as black as the Prophet's scroll.

I behold my bride in her beauty,
Ere grief her young heart had riven,
And hopes in her breast, just fledging,
Were nestling like birds of heaven.
For a starry coronal climbing,
Our souls of true joy we cheat,
And see not the mine of jewels
We trample beneath our feet.
A poor exchange is fame's transient bliss
For a wife's fond smile and a child's sweet kiss

I gaze on a bright home broken,
Which love's sunny light did fill,
Beauty and bloom changed to ashes,
Fragrant in memory still;
Eyes that waxed dim with the watching,
Ears that to music grew cold,
Cheeks that mortality whitened,
Hearts that lie under the mould.
Those tongues of fire breathe trembling tales,
Sad, sad as the songs of the nightingale.

Oh, heart! that feels palpitations
Of life in a noble guest,
The thrill of a tender triumph,
That dwells in the peaceful breast!
'Tis well if the conscience speaketh
Of faith and of banished fears,
Of soft regrets and forgiveness,
Endeavour and dried-up tears;
Of duties done at Love's holy shrine,—
The greater bliss shall be ever thine!

Meanwhile, I am garlands wreathing,
At the world's rude feet to throw;
And many a flower I'll gather
When spring's florescence shall glow;
When, throned in blossoming beauty,
Blithe birdies their sonnets sing;
And Joy from the crysalis sorrow
Bursts on its glorified wing.
But the lilies and roses are gone for aye
Which gladdened the green world yesterday.

KING CHRISTMAS!

A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY.

BY EDWARD DRAPER.

It wanted but a few days to Christmas, three or four years since, when one evening certain of the characters in our story were seated in a comfortable drawing-room in Bloomsbury. In that room, had any visitor chanced to enter, he would have found Mr. Barton, an elderly gentleman, in an armchair next the fire, reading the *Times*. Mr. Barton had not, as satirical persons might have supposed from this circumstance, just obtained that journal at a reduced price, through the medium of a contract for its purchase at secondhand. He had received it the first thing in the morning, and had then deliberately perused the money market, the City intelligence, and, finally (as it happened to be Wednesday), the list of bankrupts. He had afterwards gone to the City to utilise his talents by an exciting occupation known as "stockbroking"—of great advantage to the human race, especially to those members of it who happen to be stockbrokers.

On his return from this engrossing business Mr. Barton, having already read what he frequently declared "the only part of the paper worth reading," and having, like gentlemen of his turn of mind, no particular affection towards any branch of literature beyond journalism, found himself, as usual, driven for amusement to peruse in his favourite broadsheet matters of such trifling import as the politics, literature, police reports, common and criminal law trials, accidents, murders, extracts from periodicals, and other matters of similarly slight importance which are ordinarily, by persons of powerful intellect, spoken of as "any rubbish to fill up the paper." By the side of Mr. Barton sat his daughter, a young and pretty lady of twenty, busily engaged in working in crochet one of those nameless domestic articles which it is considered as well as fashionable to ridicule but which, nevertheless, are found in careful households to form not inelegant preservatives against the scratching of furniture by superimposed articles of ornament or use. Opposite to the old gentleman and the young lady sat Frederick, the son of Mr. Barton. Frederick appeared to be of the age of about eight-and-twenty. His attitude was perhaps more suited to the study than to the drawing-room, for his head was buried in his hands and his elbows were upon the table, while his attention was absorbed in reading, in German, "The Lectures of Professor Fichte."

The young lady let fall her work upon her lap for a moment as she smilingly contemplated Frederick's studious face. "Upon my word, Fred," she exclaimed, "you are a lively companion. For two hours since dinner you have not uttered a word, engrossed in that stupid book—for stupid I am sure it is, or you would read some of it to amuse us."

"You are wrong, Alice," returned Frederick. "On the contrary, it is the wisest book I ever read. Every sentence contains the wisdom of a life. If I do not read it a loud, it is because—because, in fact, it is not the kind of wisdom which girls can or care to comprehend. In fact, I question even whether many men can understand it—that is, at least," added Fred, stammering, as he saw his sister smile maliciously, "as it ought to be understood."

"Then I'm sure it can't be half so interesting as those strange German stories you read to us sometimes," replied Clara. "They may be silly, with their wild tales of goblins, and fiends, and witches, but at least they are amusing. Now do, just for a moment, read us a sentence or two of this extraordinary wisdom."

"Certainly," said Frederick. "I warn you beforehand though that you won't understand it. However, it is"—and he began to read. "Think the wall."

"What!" exclaimed Alice, in wonderment. The old gentleman looked off from his paper. Frederick continued—

"Think the wall—Now, think him that thinketh the wall." Alice, puzzled for a moment, broke into a merry laugh. "What rubbish!" exclaimed old Mr. Barton. "How can anybody understand that?" asked laughing Alice.

"And yet it describes the whole action and comprehension of the human mind. Think the wall—that is, consider something external to the senses. Think him that thinketh—reflect upon the mind as a power capable of contemplating itself and externals. So you see it is simple enough, and yet grand enough, after all. However, I have had enough for to night, and shall now go for my walk."

"There is wisdom for you!" ejaculated Alice. "Here are you with your wisdom, with a clear fire and a happy home, with every comfort, and yet every night you must walk out for an hour in dark, cold mist or rain, as it may be, for your philosophic contemplations, indeed. I shall really begin some evening to think there must be a lady in the case."

"Now, my dearest Alice, I assure you, positively"—
"Oh, yes, I know. You have done so many a time. Well, the sooner you are off the earlier you'll be back. And don't be long this time, for the night," added she, going to the window, "is dismal and dull enough."

"And mind the garotters," said his father. "I see by the paper they are in full cry just at this season."

Frederick left the room, and shortly after sallied from the house. On quitting it, he—shall we tell it?—lighted a meerschaum-pipe and abandoned himself to reverie. As usual with him on such occasions, his reflections assumed the form of contemplations on the human mind.

"What a wondrous field for meditation!" thought he—"this never ending study of the intellect and senses! To think that for instance, every man may have a peculiar understanding of the very senses themselves. That which affects my eye as being blue may to another be red, to a third yellow, and yet all may be taught to consider these under the mere adjective of 'purple.' How do I know that the colour which yields its hue to the peach and to the rose is not to another that which to mine is the tint of the sky? How can I tell that which I by education term red, as the colour of lips would not, were my impressions of them suddenly exchanged with those of another, be called by him green? It is a mere matter of a common vocabulary. Who shall say that it is one of a common sensation? Even one of our two eyes represents objects with a somewhat cooler, less sunny tint than the other, when both are used alternately. Which is right? Or is there in such a case any test of right, or even right or wrong at all?"

His reflections were curiously interrupted. There stood before him a grotesque object, with uncouth lineaments of that most terrible and shocking of all the degradations of the human type—a born idiot. The poor creature was about twenty, and was attired in the cast-off garments which charity had bestowed upon him, but which, by their utter want of fit, tended to heighten his natural ungainliness. Upon his breast he wore a large many-coloured paper star, and thus he appeared to regard with supreme delight and pride. His body was short, almost diminutive, but his hands and feet were of enormous size. It was reported that "Billy Christmas," the parish idiot, was possessed of an animal strength almost gigantic. Such was the creature who, with a silly grin, stood before Frederick, chuckling and pointing a huge forefinger towards his particoloured adornment.

"What, poor Billy!" exclaimed Frederick, "you out to-night!"

"No Billy now!" gibbered the idiot. "King—great King—no Billy—Christmas King—King Christmas! Star! a-h!"

"Well, good night, King Christmas. Here, take this," and he placed some coppers in the idiot's paw and strode on hastily, leaving his Majesty capering inanely on the pavement.

Frederick continued his reverie. "How wonderful are the consolations bestowed by Providence upon the most miserable of creatures! To this poor wretch his paper rosette is as actually a diamond star, considering him as the Ego of his own point of view, as the state of a monarch is real to the sovereign himself. To me it is paper; nothing more; but what is my opinion to him?"

The man in a dream is to himself in like manner wandering, acting adventures, or suffering; yet to one who watches he is but a sleeping, semi-dead, powerless piece of humanity. What reasoning, what contumely, what hard fact, as we, thinking ourselves sane, would believe it, could awaken this poor wretch from his delusion? What, indeed, is the real, but each one's own abstract opinion on questions of truth or fallacy? How do I know, as a physical, not a moral certainty, that in this case I am the sane observer, and King Billy the parish idiot? The effect of his idiocy is just the converse of that said to have been produced of old by witches who transformed men into animals, like the ass in Apuleius, men only to themselves, brute beasts to every other human being. What a hideous thought! How fearful would be such a power could it be but exercised!

Musing thus, he found himself a second time interrupted. A hideous dissipated-looking woman, who seemed to start out of the mist and darkness, presented herself before his eyes. She addressed him in accents of whining mendicancy, strangely contradicted by the expression of her eye, at once furtive and triumphant, as though she possessed a knowledge of power or of advantage unsuspected by the listener. "A halfpenny, sir, only a halfpenny," she cried, and yet her features seemed attempting to restrain a malicious smile. Frederick, physiognomist as he was, did not like her looks. "I have no coppers, my good woman," said he. The woman drew closer, her eyes gleamed yet more dubiously. The smile was now irrepressible. "My dear," cried the hag, as she pressed closely to his side—

A bright flash passed before Frederick's eyes. One scream, and one alone, escaped his lips ere he fell upon the pavement. His next impression was of the weird woman standing over him hissing an imprecation, and next pronouncing something like a magical charm. It sounded to his ears like Arabic. Two or three words alone caught his ear with sufficient distinctness to sink into his memory. "Yack—esrup—parshook!" the last was uttered smartly, like a word of command. The rest was to him a blank until his strange subsequent adventure.

He was in a town to him unknown. He was dressed as usual with all his customary care. He advanced to the first pedestrian he met to ask the name of the place. The man turned from him with a supercilious stare. A second at the same request smiled, and in like manner went his way. A third, an honest country looking fellow, grinned from ear to ear as he responded. "Go on, Billy!"

Frederick glanced backward, and saw himself followed by a troop of urchins. He gave a hasty glance of anger, and they answered it with a shout of derision. "Yah—ah—Billy—Billy, Silly Billy!" cried they as they danced around and in front of him. He felt his pockets: his purse was still safe. He walked to a cabstand, and hailed a vehicle. The driver laughed in his face. He drew his purse, and showing the shining silver, asked to be driven to the nearest railway station. The other cabbies gathered round, and gave vent to unrestrained hilarity. The boys on the outside of the circle became uproarious in their demonstration of merriment.

He spied a stationer's shop, and by way of escaping his tormentors, walked in and asked the name of the town. He was again met with a stare. He saw a newspaper, and, as he now grew confused even in his notions of time, thought he might learn the day at least by its purchase. He again took out his purse. The shopkeeper gently laid his hand on his shoulder, and turned him out of the shop. "Hooroar!" shouted the boys. "Here's a game! Here's Billy Christmas been trying to buy a newspaper, and pay for it with pebble-stones." Frederick looked at his purse. The coins were indisputable. He took one, a half-sovereign, and offered it to his nearest persecutor. A fresh shout was the result.

A factory-bell tolled close by and the boys disappeared. Frederick, hungry and weary, entered a baker's shop, but the baker, though refusing to sell him a biscuit, offered him, as if in charity, a lump of dry stale bread. Frederick made an indignant observation which seemed to tickle the baker's fancy immensely, for in a fit of laughter he left the shop to tell the joke to his wife and family in the parlour. Frederick stood a moment bewildered. Then came into his ears the reminiscence of the strange words of the mysterious woman, "I see it all!" flashed suddenly through his mind. "I am bewitched! This body, this dress, to me my own, are to others those of a helpless idiot. What is money to me is to them worthless pebbles. Heaven's mercy! who shall aid me?"

He ran from the shop. A benevolent-looking personage clad in clerical garb was passing through the street. To him Frederick rushed in his great despair. "For charity's sake, sir, listen to me a few short moments! The most miserable of men implores your aid!" The clerical gentleman replied with a benignant smile, and passed on. Frederick followed. "Do not, pray sir, for the love of all that is sacred, refuse me. I only ask your prayers to"—The clerical gentleman motioned to a policeman, who came up instantly. "Do not let poor Billy keep following me," said the clergyman. "Do not hurt him by any means either." "I'm afraid he's been a getting troublesome lately," said the constable.

"Oh yes, poor fellow; he has been talking to me about his coronation. I'm afraid that stupid star on his coat does not improve his ideas." So saying, the reverend gentleman walked off. Frederick looked at the breast of his coat. There was no star. He hurried from the spot and wandered miles away, among desolate roads, farm-houses, villages, and then dreary roads again. Some of the names were on corner houses in the villages, but these were strange to him. When, faint and despairing, he asked a girl at a well for a draught from her pitcher, she shouldered it, and kindly offered him a halfpenny. When he begged for bread of others, they sometimes offered him water and sometimes laughed as though he had addressed to them some ludicrous speech. Once he stood in a market-place, and in an earnest, temperate tone begged of any who might consider him deranged to forward him to his friends, whose address he named. He was listened to with a kind of careless attention for a few minutes, when the assembly dispersed with a loud mocking laugh, and a beadle drove him away with a cane. He had lost the power of anger at such incidents now, for he had long perceived that what to him were words full of meaning when uttered by himself were to others but unmeaning or ludicrous gibberish. Yet within himself so rational was he that he could scarce forbear smiling as he thought how many authors laboured under the same enchantment, and brought forth in the self-consciousness of genius productions which the world condemned as the ebullitions of idiocy.

In this wretched state of existence, with the full consciousness of sanity, but under the impossibility of exciting the intelligence of others, it seemed to Frederick that months passed away. At length a flood of strange, bewildering sensations appeared to rush upon him in the midst of one of his daily agonies. There was a cold sensation upon his brow, and he suddenly found himself in his own bed, attended by his sister and Dr. Brookes, the family physician. He spoke, and this time he was understood. "Thank Heaven!" cried Alice, "he is restored to us at last."

Frederick began to ask a dozen questions, but the doctor sternly enjoined silence. A knock was heard at the street door, and Alice, after departing for a few moments to speak with the visitor, returned to the chamber.

"He has come again," she said softly to the doctor. "Will it be safe to-day?"

"Not till to-morrow," replied the man of medicine. "Keep him quiet to-day. Ask him no questions, and answer none." And, after a few other directions, he left the room.

The day passed with Frederick in vain cogitations mingled with intervals of uneasy slumber. The next day, at about the same hour, the mysterious visitor again called, and was introduced to the chamber. He was an entire stranger, and soon made himself known

as a detective officer. His business was to ascertain from Frederick whether he could identify two persons then under remand on a charge of highway robbery with violence.

Fred was more bewildered than ever. "I know nothing of robbery," said he.

"You know this watch and purse?" replied the detective, holding up Fred's own, to his great astonishment.

"Yes, yes; stop! I remember a woman with strange eyes."

"And no man?"

"Yes; Billy Christmas, the idiot. No other."

The detective smiled. "Just Bill Barley's way," said he. "They're all alike when they come to. Never no identification, cos they don't see him. Well, but about this woman?"

"She asked me for alms; I refused, and then—oh, my brain wanders again. Yack, esrup, parshook!" ejaculated the patient, with the painful tone of a man struggling to conquer some uncontrollable impression.

The detective's face lit up with intelligence. "Oho!" said he; then repeated to himself the mysterious words with great glibness and unctious.

"But has that gibberish any meaning, or anything to do with my illness?" asked Frederick.

"Re-ether, I should say," rejoined the officer. "But you don't know thieves' talk. 'Yack,' that's 'watch'; 'esrup'—well, that's 'purse' spelt backwards. And here is the purse and watch, you see. 'Parshook!' is 'look sharp' much the same way. And sharp they did look; but not sharp enough, or so sharp as others."

The officer then narrated Fred's adventure. The woman had been for years a notorious street thief. She had on this occasion for a companion a ruffian, known as Bill Barley, whose particular vocation was the line of business known as the garotte. It was he who had rendered Fred insensible, by throttling him, unseen, from behind. One sudden scream had alone escaped the victim; but this had produced immediate unexpected succour. Billy, the idiot, heard the cry, and was on the spot in an instant. He flew at the miscreant Barley with the fury of a wild beast, and actually fixed his teeth in the wretch's shoulder. So were the two found struggling when the police arrived, attracted by the yells of pain and terror to which Barley in turn was giving vent. The watch and purse, as if they had just dropped from his hand, were found lying on the pavement. So also was a life-preserver.

The sequel need scarcely be told. Fred recovered, and Billy was rewarded for his aid in the only way in which reward could be made beneficial to him—namely, in the form of food, clothing, and shelter in his times of need. The thieves were duly tried and the woman convicted. Barley was more fortunate. His counsel ingeniously argued that there was not the slightest proof against him. He had been attracted to the spot by hearing a cry, and had there been set upon by an idiot whose evidence could not be taken, or it would certainly clear him. The property was not found upon him, and the life-preserver had been dropped, no doubt, by the real thief. So the jury acquitted the amiable William, who facetiously enough, before leaving the dock, raised a roar of laughter by demanding his life-preserver, unjustly detained by the police. He committed fifty garotte robberies after this, killed two or three deserving people, and was at length convicted on the clearest evidence of a brutal murder of a shopkeeper in broad day on his own threshold. And this was Barley's last public act, save one, to which no further allusion need here be made.

As for Frederick, this Christmas adventure cured him of his desire of evening rambles, and, what was better, of his overweening partiality for psychological studies, which never afterwards failed to awaken most painful remembrances. His supposed bewitchment was satisfactorily explained to him by Dr. Brookes to have been, not the continuous hallucination of his ten days' illness, but the mere dawning of returning consciousness, acted upon by a memory of thoughts and impressions immediately preceding its loss, and lasting in reality but a few minutes, just as dreams when they occur invariably lead to the waking state. And, as the doctor paradoxically remarked, when he had made this and other matters clear to his own satisfaction, "There is nothing wonderful in nature—except nature."

THE COASTGUARD.

NOTHING but a sense of duty could keep a man there on such a day as this. Christmas time, too, and wife and children perhaps gathered round the cottage fire and wishing father would come home. But he may be inwardly comforted by that very sense of doing his duty, and experience therein a sense of spiritual exaltation to which you and I, my friend, who shouldn't see the fun of walking even into the next street unless in jovial company, may be utter strangers just now. He is a plain man, not much given to discourse, perhaps—contemplative, it may be, as some coastguardsmen are—addicted to the farring of trousers and overalls hung on garden palings in his leisure moments—not disdaining grog, but drinking it in a philosophical and quiet spirit. All this, and even more commonplace than this, he may be; but yet, looking out far over that vast rolling deep, all but obscured by the feathery flakes that fall from the cold, stately sky;—looking afar from that bleak, lonely height, he may have dim thoughts of angels singing upon the plains of Bethlehem—may, really feel their holy carol vibrate in his heart of hearts, as between teeth clenched against the cold he hums the old tune sung to him by his mother when he was a fair-haired fishboy. So shall Christmas live within him; so may a sense of duty done bring a happy Christmas to us all.

SNIPE-SHOOTING.

THERE are no more thorough sportsmen than the English. In every land where there is a chance of new adventure and of noble game the undaunted Briton finds a way, often through almost trackless forests and arid plains, for the purpose of gratifying his propensity for the chase. It is an occupation requiring both physical and mental endurance, the frame capable of enduring hardships, the mind accustomed to patient determination and a self-reliance which amidst savage companions at once assumes leadership and arrives at conclusions often superior to those of the merely instinctive knowledge and ordinary experience of the native hunter.

To those who stay at home, however, "the season" brings with it a keen enjoyment, not so exciting as that of the African explorer or the dweller in the jungle, but at the same time possessing all the advantages of a manly and healthy exercise—a glorious holiday over moor and fen, the crowning glory of which is the heavy bag which forms the topic of exultation at the evening reunion.

Amongst all the ordinary forms of sport in this country, perhaps snipe-shooting is the most pleasant, especially when the birds are plentiful and the weather crisp and frosty. So much depends upon quickness of perception; and with the snipe there is such a welcome variety of shots that the man who can use his gun handily is tolerably certain of some share of success, while the mere tyro must inevitably improve his shooting by the practice the birds afford. The snipe generally flies against the wind, and it is necessary for the sportsman to walk in the opposite direction, so that if the bird rises before him it will fly back, and describe a kind of circle round the point where he is standing. Thus it will be some time before the length of the shot is increased, and a capital opportunity will be afforded for taking a certain aim. Of course if the bird should turn and fly down the wind the shot will be more difficult, and the knowing hands wait till the flight becomes steady and then take a long shot, but at the same time a sure one. When dogs are taken into the field for snipe-shooting it will generally be found best to select a good staunch old pointer who moves at a jog-trot pace. But it often spoils the dogs for grouse and partridge, although not for pheasants; but on the moors in the grouse season

he may often point a snipe, and the dogs used for both snipe and pheasants seldom beat the ground well unless they have had a good deal of experience and are worthy of being trusted.

The localities where snipe are most plentiful vary according to the state of the season. In wet weather the birds mostly seek the hills; but in a good season they are to be found on the marshes where they can most easily feed by piercing the earth with their long bills to search for worms. Some of the species remain here throughout the year, and breed in the great marshes and mountain bogs of the north of England, Scotland, and Ireland, as well as in the western part of the island. The nests are generally built of the materials near at hand—such as coarse grass and heath—and occupy some dry nook near their feeding-ground. Here they lay four eggs of a sort of olive colour, splashed with brown and dusty blotches, and in the breeding-season the male bird will keep on the wing for an hour together, rising like a lark, and with a shrill note, quite unlike its usual winter cry. In descending to the nest the sound is changed to a kind of bleat. Snipe are found almost all over the world, and consist of several varieties: the great snipe, which is nearly double the size of the ordinary species, and differently marked; the double snipe, which is a bird of passage, of a speckled-grey colour, and to be found when the meadows are mowed at the end of July. These are the fattest of their tribe, and are generally supposed to be the finest in flavour. While on the subject of fat birds, it may be mentioned that they are all plumpest in frosty weather; the reason for which is supposed to be their taking up their quarters near some warm, moist locality where worms are more plentiful, while in a wet season they are compelled to take longer flights in search of food.



THE COASTGUARD'S CHRISTMAS DAY.

The most difficult sort to shoot and the least valuable when shot is the jack snipe, which feeds upon small insects such as are to be found in black bogs; seeds and gravel have also been found in its stomach, which would seem to point it out as an entirely different species. It would appear that the jack snipe often succeeds in making game of the sportsman, for it has often happened that one of these has been fired at half a score of times, and after each shot will pitch so close to the anxious marksman that he believes it to be wounded, and is only convinced of his mistake by the bird rising—a performance which he will always delay until he is in absolute danger.

It is related of a Mr. Molloy, the Quartermaster of a regiment in barracks in Ireland, that he went shooting on every opportunity which presented itself, frequently obtaining a day's leave for the purpose (a statement not difficult to believe), and that he always sprung one particular jack snipe, who had a habit of pitching so close to him after he had fired that he was continually running short distances for the purpose of securing his bird, only to discover that it took the liberty of making another trifling excursion. On one day he acknowledged to having fired eighteen times at this most amusing fowl, who, in fact, afforded him the height of sport during a whole season.

The end of the story is painful, both on account of its ungrateful and unsportsmanlike character. Mr. Molloy happened on one occasion to be crossing the bog where his humorous acquaintance resided, and the latter, who was always ready to oblige, rose with the utmost politeness. "There's my old friend!" shouted the Quartermaster, and shying his stick—whether with intention or as a merely cheerful greeting is not recorded—Mr. Molloy bagged his game at last.



SNIPESHOOTING.